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A NEW ENDEAVOR.

DEDICATED TO THE

YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR^r
OF AMERICA.

BY

SOPHIE BRONSON TITTERINGTON.

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A NEW ENDEAVOR.

CHAPTER I.

MICROSCOPES VERSUS TELESCOPES.

"GIRLS, I have an idea!"

"How you startle us, Katie," laughed Cecile Carey, as she rose to welcome the breezy little new-comer.

"Where in the world did you find it, Kitten?" asked Lucy Gray, another of the "Endeavor cronies," as outsiders were apt to term the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor of Woodland Park church.

"Don't frighten my precious idea away, girls," said Katie. "We believe in special providences, you know, and I do think the dear Lord himself put this idea into my head, or rather put it in my way, for it came from something I was reading this morning. I had ever so much housework to do, being Monday and chronic wash-day at our house, but I kept musing over the thought, until it is quite clear to my mind."

"Do tell us about it, Katie dear," said Cecile.
"Is it anything new for our Endeavorers?"

"That's just it, Cecile. You remember Mr. Drummond, who was here a few weeks ago, and gave us such a grand talk on Africa? That was really the beginning, for ever since I've felt as if our Christian Endeavor work was one-sided. We are a busy set of people, to be sure, but everything we have done so far lies right around our own doors."

"The Bible says we must first hedge about our own vineyards," remarked Lucy.

"Yes, certainly," said Katie, who was fairly bubbling over with her new thought, "but didn't Jesus say, 'And ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth?' If that doesn't mean both Home and Foreign Missions, what does it mean?"

"Why, Katie, you're quite a little preacher," said Cecile, smiling. "You make me think of what grandpapa used to say: 'Charity begins at home, but it doesn't end there.' I suppose it's a very dreadful confession for a Christian to make, but the fact is that I never could feel much interest in Foreign Missions."

"Nor I either," said Lucy. "It always seems so far away and dim. I am sure there is more

work to do right here in Woodland than we can ever hope to get done."

"Oh dear!" said Katie. "I wish I had brought that paper down here with me that I was reading this morning. I can't make it clear as that writer did. You see, girls, I have always felt just as you do, but now I'm converted on that point. One thing the article said was this—that the trouble with too many Christians was that their soul-vision was too microscopic, when it ought to be telescopic as well."

"There *is* an idea there," said Cecile. "Don't you remember, girls, how our Natural History teacher used to show us little things with the microscope? the feathers on a butterfly's wing; the lance of a mosquito; the eyes in the head of a fly; and things of that sort. But when our class went over to the University last year, you remember that in the evening we had a peep through the great telescope in the Observatory, and that we were almost frightened as with its help our eyes swept the heavens. I never had such an idea of the awfulness of space before."

"That's just it," said Katie eagerly. "The microscope is wonderful, of course, and gives us a glimpse of God's great power in one direction. But the astronomer, who makes a study

of the broad spaces of the universe, must have a broader idea of God's whole creation. Oh dear, the thought is too big! I cannot express it to you as it seems to me."

"You're doing well, I'm sure," said Cecile, smiling. "There is surely some difference between an insect's eye and the great worlds sweeping round their sun-centres. Go on, dear; perhaps you'll convert me yet."

"I don't like to hear you call the work here in Woodland small and insignificant, Cecile," said Lucy gravely.

"No indeed," answered Cecile quickly. "I was only carrying out Katie's simile."

"But, girls," said Katie timidly, "I don't want to preach. Please don't imagine such a thing. I think the studies we had with the microscope most wonderful, and our education would be very incomplete without them. But really, I don't know but the needs here and there would almost bear out the comparison. It is startling when you get at the facts. But I haven't told you my idea yet. After reading the first article, I turned the leaf, and there was the account of how a band of young people took up the study of missions. Why, girls, it's just a wonderful plan; not a bit like the old-style missionary meetings that we cared so little about.

The question came into my mind, why can't our Endeavor Society adopt this plan for a part at least of our Literaries this winter? We might try the experiment, at all events. Let us switch off on to a different track; do literary work still, but use all the telescopes available to enlarge our vision."

"Why, Katie, your idea really begins to 'show up for something,' as Charlie would say. Go on; it's getting interesting." So remarked Cecile, her eyes sparkling and her attention eager.

"It isn't worked out very far yet; but, girls, whatever we do, don't let us call it a missionary meeting. That will frighten away two-thirds of the members. Let us call it a Travelling Club, as these other young people did, to begin with."

The girls were thoroughly interested now. They drew from Katie as many details as possible of her plan. The more they learned, the more eager were they to enter into it. Finally Katie said,

"Half a dozen of us should be ready with the first program, and the carrying out of it also, keeping it a secret from the rest until the performance of it at the meeting."

"You're a born planner, Katie; and for such

a small body, dead in earnest;" said Lucy Gray. "I will confess that clear down in the innermost depths of my soul I know that you are right in feeling that we are one-sided in our Christian Endeavor work."

"Amen!" said Cecile. "Katie's microscope idea has taken quite a hold of me. I vote for the telescopes."

"Will you help me, girls?" said Katie eagerly. "It will take at least six of us to carry through the first meeting, and it won't do to have it a bit dull, either, you know."

"We'll do our best to make it sparkle," laughed Cecile, "with you, Midget, for our Major-General."

"We ought not to go a step further," said Katie, "without laying the matter before Ruth Ellis. As our President, she has the first right to know, and in fact I was on my way to her house when I stopped in here."

"Let us all go and see her, then, immediately," said Lucy Gray; and soon the trio were on their way to the brick mansion on Floral Avenue where Dr. Ellis lived.

Woodland was a Northern city, and this November afternoon was crisp and cold, with a suggestion of winter in the air. It was quite a walk to Floral Avenue, and while the three

girls are on their way thither, let us take a brief glance at them.

A student of character would have been much interested in noticing the differences between these three friends.

Katie Ingersoll was a petite maiden, a brunette, with life in every motion. She was a breezy little body, and no one minded if her ribbons did sometimes get awry, blown about by her energy of action. Cecile Carey was tall, slender in form, graceful in motion, and a perfect blonde. Her dress and her speech were usually correct, and her enthusiasms few.

Lucy Gray was very different from either. The blonde and the brunette were mingled in her complexion, her brown hair had a dash of auburn, her nose would turn up slightly, while her decidedly practical temperament and healthy conscience combined to make her useful and helpful in her small world.

Such was the trio that was to start a new departure in the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor of Woodland Park church.

These three friends were real girls, even if they did discuss grave topics occasionally. And isn't the coming, ideal girl one that can enter heartily into fun and frolic at the right times, and also turn her attention to weightier mat-

ters? Our three girls were in high spirits as they rang the doorbell at 43 Floral Avenue.

Fortunately Ruth was at home. She looked a little troubled and out of sorts, but brightened up when she saw her visitors.

"How fresh you look!" she exclaimed. "The cold air must agree with you, when it can paint such roses on your cheeks!"

"It is splendidly bracing," said Katie. "I believe a bit of the frostiness would do you good, Ruthie, for the lily, rather than the rose, is your patron flower to-day."

"Which is a poetical way of telling me I'm pale, I suppose," she laughed. "Well, perhaps I am, for I have been indulging in the blues."

"We won't allow any more of it, at least while we're here," said Lucy. "I'm glad winter is coming. There are so many things to enjoy, and such a capital chance for all sorts of endeavors."

Ruth's face clouded again. "Really, girls," she said, "that touches the point of my perplexity. I must resign my position as President of the Christian Endeavor Society. We have come to the point where we just run in a rut. It's the same thing over and over again, without any life or soul in the matter. I know it ought not

to be so, and probably it's my fault," she added. "So I feel as if I ought to step out of the way, and let somebody else have a chance to do better."

"No, indeed, Ruth Ellis," spoke up Lucy Gray, in her decided fashion. "You are our President, and President you remain through your term of office at least. Our small Katie here has had an inspiration that will perhaps help to lift us out of the ruts."

Ruth looked so puzzled that the trio laughed outright.

"Katie," said Cecile, "do hurry and tell Ruth all about it."

So adjured, Katie went on, in her eager, impulsive way, to explain her idea once more. Ruth listened with earnest attention, then the four fell to talking it over. The afternoon waned, the early twilight fell, before the conference was ended. It seemed to Ruth that a new field for study and work was really opening before the beloved Endeavor Society.

The present problem was to select the remaining two to help carry out the all-important first program.

"Since we four are all girls," said Ruth, "I think the other two should be boys. Oh, Cecile, can't you coax Charlie into it?"

"I don't know," said Cecile. "Sisters can't always coax as well as some other folks. Suppose you try your powers of persuasion upon him, Katie!"

The girls smiled, for it was well known that Katie Ingersoll had potent influence with Charlie Carey.

"We can unite forces, perhaps, Cecile," she answered quietly. "What other boy can you girls suggest?"

"Stephen Hollister might be open to conviction," Lucy Gray said. "He is very conscientious, but so reserved I don't feel very well acquainted with him. He always gives me an impression of power back of all his quietness, if he should choose to use it."

"Yes," said President Ruth, "I have been thinking for some time that I should like to know him better. I believe he would take hold of our plan. Lucy, will you undertake to secure his assistance?"

"Certainly," said she, with frank good-nature. "When shall I tell him this self-appointed program committee will have its first meeting?"

"To-morrow night will be the church prayer-meeting, and of course that has first claim. Can't you all come here on Wednesday evening,

and map out our work? Though I am sure I don't in the least see how we are going to get at it. Katie must bring along all the documents that will give us light as to how that other Society managed the matter."

The regular weekly prayer-meetings of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor were held on Sunday afternoons. On the one following the episode which opens our story the President remarked that she would take the responsibility of announcing that on the next Literary night, a week from the coming Friday, there would be an entirely new order of exercises, conducted by six of their number. No hint of the nature of this departure would be given, but after they had listened to one evening's program, the Society was to vote whether it should be continued or not. A full attendance was especially requested.

The air became immediately charged with expectancy. The four girls had enlisted the two boys before mentioned without much difficulty, and as all six were equal to keeping their own counsel, the mystery was provokingly fascinating. In the meantime Ruth had secured a rarely efficient helper, which took a heavy load of anxiety from her mind. The story of this will be told in the next chapter.

CHAPTER II.

HELPING AND HOPING.

THE Rev. Henry Seymour was pastor of the Woodland Park church. He had held this office only a few months, but had already won a large place in the hearts of the young people. The older ones were not lacking in appreciation, but as the story is to deal with the lambs of the flock, it is well to emphasize the fact that they loved and trusted their pastor.

When the girls went away on that memorable Monday afternoon, they left a sadly puzzled President behind them. Her present perplexity did not lie in the same line as before they came, for she had taken new heart and hope. But now her trouble was her own ignorance. How to plan for the new departure was more than she could see.

She went to her pleasant room to think it all over. Katie's detail of the plan, and her intense conviction that Christian Endeavor work touched foreign as well as home shores, impressed her strangely. Was this the answer to her prayer, offered daily, that God would in

some way breathe life into the Society called by the name of Christian Endeavor? The feeling gained strength that this new plan was of the Lord. She sank on her knees with a silent, earnest longing for guidance.

She did not know how long she remained there, but at last there stole into her heart a blessed feeling of rest and peace. Rising, she seated herself in her little rocker to try and think out the "how" and "where."

The great trouble was that she knew so little about missions. Like Cecile and Lucy, the foreign world had hitherto held little interest for her. The whole thing seemed far off and indefinite.

"It will be like the blind leading the blind," she said aloud, with a little, half hysterical laugh. "But, then, why can't I learn?" she thought. "If we can only get started once, I believe the way will open before us."

"I'll go and see Mr. Seymour the first thing to-morrow morning," she said, as the thought flashed into her mind. "He can help and advise us, I am sure. There, I feel better! What a relief it is to have somebody that is wise to lean upon!"

It was barely nine on Tuesday morning when Ruth rang the bell at the front door of the par-

sonage. She had gone a little out of her way to get the paper containing the plan from Katie Ingersoll, saying nothing, however, about her proposed call; for Katie would wonder at not being invited to go with her, and in her present mood Ruth felt that she preferred a quiet talk with the pastor alone.

But this was destined not to be, at least for this time. Mrs. Seymour came into the parlor, saying that her husband had gone out to see some sick parishioners, but would probably be back soon.

"Come up into my snuggerly, dear," she said. "It is warmer there, and it will be pleasanter waiting Mr. Seymour's return."

So saying, she led the way up stairs into a bright room, which bore the impress of being a woman's sanctum. On one side was a pleasant eastern window, near which was a writing-desk, with every convenience. The other side contained a sewing machine, work-table, and low rocking-chair. A larger rocker stood near the stove, seeming to invite one to comfortable meditation.

"This is my workshop, Miss Ruth," said Mrs. Seymour, smiling. "I can vibrate between the needle and the pen, as necessity or inclination may decide."

There was something besides mere cosiness in the room, and Ruth felt it in her inmost soul, but could not at first explain it even to herself. A few exquisite pictures adorned the walls, hanging shelves held some choice books, and a stand in another corner the latest magazines. Ruth's own home was a pleasant one, but there was a nameless atmosphere in this simple apartment that thrilled the girl. A shelf in the window held two or three blossoming plants, but they would not explain the charm, for Ruth had blossoms at home.

"A busy woman like myself," said Mrs. Seymour brightly, as she took up some knitting, "needs to have everything conveniently at hand, in a place decidedly her own. Mr. Seymour has his study, of course, while this is my sanctum, where I can sew, read, or write, as occasion may demand."

"It is a lovely room, dear Mrs. Seymour," said Ruth enthusiastically. "I don't wonder you write such exquisite stories with such a place in which to think them out. You see, I happened to get hold of one of them the other day, and it helped me over a very hard place."

"Did it?" said Mrs. Seymour, blushing a little at the unqualified admiration expressed in Ruth's face and voice. "I am always glad to

know of my little waifs doing any good. It makes me thankful to the dear Lord when he gives me the privilege of being helpful to any one in need of help."

"Perhaps you can help me, Mrs. Seymour, just now, better than any one else," said Ruth eagerly. "I came to see Mr. Seymour about it," she added, "but I would rather tell you first. Perhaps I should have thought of you, but, you see, we were not very well acquainted; yet somehow the room—and everything—" she said rather incoherently.

Mrs. Seymour understood, and her smile reassured Ruth, who was distressed at her own bungling.

"The Lord puts us here to help one another," she said, so heartily and earnestly that the girl's embarrassment vanished quite away. Forgetting all her shyness, she told the whole story of her perplexities in regard to the Christian Endeavor Society, and Katie's plan, which promised so well, if only they could carry it out. She confessed her own ignorance, largely the result of her former lack of interest, and told of her new desire to have broader sympathies and a soul-vision that could include the whole world.

"I believe that your coming here was also in

answer to prayer, dear Miss Ruth," said Mrs. Seymour, with tears of sympathy in her eyes. "I have so wanted to be of use to the young people of the church, because I love them. Before I was married I spent years in teaching, and since that time I have always been more or less identified with their work; and I will confess I have felt a little lonely here, because you all seemed so well organized and so busy that you did not need me."

"How little you knew about it!" exclaimed Ruth. "And now that you have found out what a needy set we are, you will use all your powers in our behalf, I hope."

"You may be sure that I shall be glad to do all I can. Let me see this plan of yours, and perhaps I can be of service."

Ruth handed her the paper with a feeling of absolute relief. How blessed it was to have the matter taken right into such efficient hands!

Mrs. Seymour studied the page before her in perfect silence for a time. Then looking up at Ruth, she said,

"Your friend Katie is right. This is a grand idea, and one full of possibilities. I have never seen anything I liked half as well for missionary study. It is a sad fact that the very word *missions* has become such a bugbear to many

people, that as long as they regard it as a disagreeable necessity, we must sugar-coat the pill until it suits their taste. Then we will educate them to better things."

More talk followed as to the details of the first meeting. At last Mrs. Seymour said,

"Can not your committee meet with me on Wednesday evening? I will map out a program from materials in the library, and we will work it into form together at that time."

"Indeed we will!" said Ruth enthusiastically. "Oh Mrs. Seymour, I know the Lord has sent you to our help! I cannot tell you what a load is taken from my mind!"

"This is work that I especially enjoy," said the pastor's wife, "and I am glad the Master has given me some of it to do. You know, dear, that our part is to perform whatever comes along in the very best manner possible, whether it be simple home duties or outside effort for him."

Ruth's heart was too full to speak. She raised her face to her new friend for a kiss, which was given in a tender fashion, then took her way homeward to the solitude of her own room, where she had such a habit of sitting down to "think things over." But this time her first movement was to fall on her knees and thank God for such help in her perplexity.

Katie and Cecile came in that afternoon to talk over matters, that they might be ready for the boys on Wednesday evening. With great rejoicing they listened to Ruth's story of the morning's experience, and felt that now the plan must surely succeed.

After prayer-meeting, Charlie Carey waited for Katie to see her safely home. It was bright moonlight, and the air was much warmer than it had been for some days past, so all things were favorable for an extension of their walk. Scarcely were they out of hearing of the various groups, homeward bound, than Charlie began upon the subject weighing on his mind.

"I say, Katie, what is all this fuss about? I don't understand what it is you want me to do, nor why you want me to do it. I only know that it is something about foreign missions, and that is too far-off a matter for us to trouble ourselves over."

Katie's heart throbbed with a desire to make him see things in the new light that had come to her. He was standing just where she had stood only a few short weeks before. A swift little prayer went upward, and then Katie, in her own simple, earnest fashion, told him the story of her conversion to the cause. He lis-

tened in silence until she gave him the illustration of the microscope and the telescope.

"Whew!" he said, and added, as Cecile had done before him,

"There's an idea for you, sure! I always enjoyed microscopic studies, but I'm afraid exclusive attention to them would make a fellow near-sighted. I'd like a peep through a telescope now and then."

"That's just it, Charlie!" said Katie eagerly. "Our soul-eyes do get near-sighted when we never train them to look beyond our own noses. It is easy enough to see what lies near by, and that always looks the biggest and most important. But let us once get a grand, sweeping view, and we begin to grow—in our ideas and sympathies, I mean—right away."

"Well, Katie, I've no doubt you are right. I want you to understand, however, that I consented to go into this thing solely for your sake. If you can convince me that the matter is as important as you think it is, I'll be in earnest on my own account."

"I'll ask the Lord to show you, Charlie, as he has me. If you can go through that first meeting, and help carry out the program we expect to have, with Mrs. Seymour to help plan it, without being converted heart and soul to

foreign missions, I shall be disappointed; that's all."

The committee meeting at the parsonage, so greatly dreaded by some, so joyfully looked forward to by Ruth at least, was eventful in results. The meeting was held in Mrs. Seymour's own snuggerly, which contained, on this occasion, a table, with books and papers in addition to its regular furnishings. Mrs. Seymour won all the six hearts—or rather five, for Ruth had given hers before—by the heartiness with which she undertook to help them, and the sweet, gentle dignity which called forth loving respect.

The pastor's wife was an inspiration to young people. She gave them her best and expected them to do their best. And there was something in this expectation that called forth a desire to make the most of themselves; to meet the standard that with apparent unconsciousness she set before each of them.

Her very first act was a surprise. Instead of entering at once upon the matter of the program, she said, "Let us pray."

That prayer was a revelation to them all. Simple, direct, talking quietly as with a friend at hand, the words sank into every one of the six hearts present. Let me transcribe them:

"Dear Lord, we are about to undertake thy business to-night. Lead in it all; guide in every detail; give sight where we are blind, strength where we are weak. Open our eyes, that we may see the needs of the broad world. For thy Son's sake, who died to save it: Amen."

Can you wonder that with such an introduction each of the six young hearts was uplifted and raised into harmony with what they were about to consider? Stephen Hollister was the only one whose mind did not revert to the telescope simile. In his case there had been no opportunity to tell him the whole story. But he was an earnest, conscientious Christian, desiring to do his whole duty as far as revealed to him. So the coming program, with the illumination of the Holy Spirit, would be to him, as well as the rest, a telescope which should reveal depths and spaces undreamed of before and needs too pitiful for expression.

Mrs. Seymour had prepared a plan which she proceeded to unfold before them. She did not propose to do all the work, but wise woman that she was, she mapped out the way, leaving them to follow by paths of their own making. Much study was involved, but she had all needful information and authorities at hand, and she made each one's part so plain that there could be no

misunderstanding. The pastor looked in a moment, to assure them of his full sympathy and hearty approval in this new departure.

The six members went away loaded with books, magazines, and papers. They were to work together or separately, as might suit them best, and report progress at the parsonage the next Wednesday evening. On their way home Charlie Carey could not help a mischievous whisper to his companion.

“Are all these telescopes, Katie?”

Whereupon she answered, smiling, yet grave,

“I hope so, Charlie,” adding rather inconsistently, “Are they very heavy?”

“Slightly so; for my arms are only mortal flesh. But won’t it make a fellow dig to get his part ready!”

Now, it must be confessed that Charlie Carey was, if not absolutely lazy, considerably disinclined to mental application. He was well endowed in the matter of brains, and had managed to graduate in a creditable fashion in the same class at the High school with the four girls of our acquaintance. Had he not been a Christian, there would have been much danger that he would have become a mere loafer. As it was, he was sadly disappointing his mother’s fondest hopes by his disinclination to enter col-

lege. Katie was too keen-eyed not to see this failing in her friend, and she had made it her endeavor to brace him up and inspire him with manly ambitions. More than he liked to acknowledge to himself did Charlie desire to win her respect. This aided him in trying to shake off his natural indolence and be something in the world.

"Oh dear!" Katie would sigh in the depths of her heart, "I wish Charlie was a poor boy, with nothing but his hands and brains to depend upon! He would have to wake up and do something then. But as long as he has his father to supply everything he wants, he does not realize what he might be. But he shall wake up!" and the small maiden stamped her foot. "I'll stick pins into him! metaphorically, of course." And the flash in her eyes betokened little peace to the tall youth in question, if he persisted in his aimless course; and she rejoiced that he was willing to help carry out this program, because it involved real application and study.

Stephen Hollister was cast in a different mould. His early life had not been hedged around with luxury, but he had been a boy in a home of poverty. His father was a man of rugged honesty and sterling character, although

he had to labor unceasingly for the daily bread of his family. His mother died when Stephen was only nine, and since that time he had fought his own battles and won his own way.

A hunger for knowledge had been among his earliest remembrances, and the boy had grown up with a fixed and unalterable purpose to have an education. To this everything was made a stepping-stone. Work he would, early and late, to secure means for the privileges of school. What were shabby clothes, toil-stained hands! They were factors to help him win the end he had in view.

Stephen was not brilliant, but his dogged perseverance carried him forward when mere mental quickness would have left him behind. As he reached the higher classes in school, he became known as a thorough student, master of everything he had gone over, to the minutest detail. He had come to Woodland, years before the time of our story, to enjoy the advantages of its schools. He graduated with the highest honors one year before Charlie Carey and the four girls.

Three years previous he had been converted, and became a member of Woodland Park church. He was thoroughly a Christian young man. Indeed, it sometimes seemed to his fel-

lows that he was painfully in earnest. But then, you see, life had been a terribly real thing to him, no mere rose-water existence, but a stern struggle with unrelenting poverty in thorn-hedged ways. His conscience was always wide awake and alert. His whole life had been such a desperate fight with obstacles that he was intensely practical. It is not strange that there was little sympathy between him and Charlie Carey. Indeed, nothing but the Christian tie of brotherhood prevented positive antagonism.

Do not get the false impression that Stephen Hollister had no love for the beautiful in his make-up. He simply had been without the time to admire lovely things, but there were occasions when strange sensations thrilled his breast, and he found himself honestly trying to analyze them. Cecile Carey, for example, affected him queerly. Her beautiful face, her slender form, her graceful movements, her low, sweet voice, made him feel like a great, coarse lump of mother earth in contrast. If she spoke to him, his wits fled, and he blundered, as he told himself, like the fool that he was. But pluck, or grit, as the other boys called it, was a controlling factor in Stephen Hollister's make-up, and after one or two painful scenes of this

kind he shut his teeth firmly together, with the resolve that no mortal girl should so upset him again. In pursuance of this resolve, he sought opportunities for talking with her, until he had so far conquered himself as to be able to keep up his share of the conversation more creditably. But she always thrilled him as a bright star does the heart of the devout astronomer.

Lucy Gray, with her plain, practical sense, made him much more comfortable. They met on a more common ground. But, strange to say, Stephen preferred the society of Cecile, even though his bodily members, his feet and hands, became unmanageably large and awkward in her presence and his tongue would occasionally stammer.

He had remained in Woodland after his graduation because a good situation had been offered him in a bank, with salary sufficiently large to enable him to lay by quite an amount yearly toward the college education which he was fully determined to have.

The Christian Endeavor Society of Woodland Park church had attracted him because of its opportunities for Christian growth and development. At first all for self, you see, but in the sequel we shall perceive the results.

CHAPTER III.

SIX SIGHT-SEERS.

THESE were busy days for our six Endeavorers. The church prayer-meeting evening was the only night previous to Wednesday they had not met somewhere for preparation. Wednesday evening found them all once more at the parsonage, where they were to show Mrs. Seymour what they had accomplished toward the program. Their report was very satisfactory, and a review of the whole matter promised well for Friday evening.

The eventful time came; and if you are as curious as those of the Society who had not been able to gain a hint of the coming program you will pardon a rather full report of the proceedings.

The meeting was held in the usual place, the prayer-meeting room at the church. Every seat was taken, for the matter had become noised about beyond the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, and many besides the members had begged the privilege of being present. Ruth's heart almost failed her as she

and her five coadjutors passed in and took the reserved seats in front. She had asked Mr. Seymour to conduct brief opening exercises, and after singing and prayer he took up his Bible and said,

“I shall not read much Scripture to you to-night; only five short words of one syllable: ‘The field is the world.’”

“Has he heard about the telescopes?” Katie wondered; and then her attention was claimed again by the speaker’s voice as he said,

“A little child’s idea of the world is bounded by his own town. As he grows older, the boundaries increase, until at last, when he goes to school, he learns about the round globe on which he lives. Still his ideas are indefinite: he knows, but does not realize, that great nations dwell on the other side of the sea; that in that far-off somewhere there are forests and rivers and mountains, strange beasts and birds. But let him take the traveller’s srip in his hand and sail across the oceans, and see with his own eyes the wonders of which he has faintly heard, then the whole becomes a clear reality.

“Our Saviour said, ‘The field is the world;’ the great harvest field, where either Christ or Satan is reaping souls. We hear of millions across the seas that are perishing—souls that

might be saved for eternity, but are going down into the blackness of despair. The words seem like idle tales, and we are not aroused. We propose to visit one of these lands to-night, to catch a glimpse of one little corner of this world-field, that having seen, we shall no longer be careless listeners to the cry that comes over the sea."

The preliminaries being concluded, the time came for the revelation of all the planning and study of the past two weeks. With beating heart, and a voice that would tremble a little in spite of herself, Ruth arose and said,

"We are six tourists, travelling in Asiatic lands in search of information regarding the country, the people, their religion, their customs and modes of life, etc. Our tour this evening will be in Burmah. Charlie Carey will give you the story of our voyage thither."

Charlie rose promptly to his feet, with an energy that contrasted strongly with his usually rather languid movements. Unfolding his paper, he read as follows:

"Our party of six started for the Orient by the so-called overland route, which we found contained more water than land travel. Our missionaries used to have a long, tedious journey in sailing vessels round the Cape of Good

Hope; whereas in these later times steam bears them on its swift wings, and by a shorter route, to their destination.

“In getting our outfit we had to prepare for all extremes of temperature. A winter passage is preferable, so we set sail December 15th, in the good steamer Nevada. We find the Atlantic quite rough during the early part of the voyage, but on the whole our passage is very pleasant. Our course from New York has been N. E. and we have a tolerably quick run.

“Early on the morning of December 26th we set foot for the first time on the soil of Old England, landing in the busy city of Liverpool. The Nevada anchors some distance out, and we were taken ashore by a little steam-tug. After the ordeal of the Custom House we found our way to the Washington Hotel, where we stayed until the next day. We had little time for sight-seeing in Liverpool, as we left the next morning for London, at 9:15.

“You can read all about travel in Europe any day, so we will pass over the European part of our trip, only pausing to say that from London we went to Dover, on the English Channel. After a dreadfully rough bit of sailing on this proverbially ill-behaved Channel, we found ourselves in France, at Calais. From Calais we

went to Paris, and thence to Marseilles, where we had our first glimpse of the Mediterranean. We took our baggage directly to the steamship Poonah, of the Peninsular and Oriental line, which is lying in the harbor.

“What a wonderful trip we had on the blue Mediterranean! We passed Stromboli, the great volcano on its own little island. Smoke and fire were issuing from it. We sailed through the Strait of Messina, and had a charming view of the island of Sicily on the one hand and Italy on the other. We could even see the houses and the orange trees on shore. As we sailed through the narrow passage we beheld a beautiful rainbow spanning the waters and lasting for several minutes.”

Here Stephen Hollister became chronicler.

“We reached Alexandria in Egypt January 28th. It is not an attractive place, being low and sandy. Here we must change steamers, as the Poonah went no farther. The Egyptians came out in small boats to the ship, and quite a quarrel ensued between them for our party. Charlie and I had our hands full when half a dozen of them made a final grab for our baggage. The officers of the ship interfered and brought them to order. They were a hard-looking set, but we selected the most promising and

reached the shore safely. Here we had another unpleasant experience at the Custom House, a filthy place. The officials were full of curiosity, and pried into our belongings till it seemed time to interfere.

"After this an omnibus took us to the P. and O. Hotel. It is a queer looking place, but clean; a rare virtue in this country. At lunch many new dishes appeared of which we Americans were a little afraid. But there were plenty of fine oranges.

"Our rooms overlooked one of the principal streets; and it was very amusing to see the little donkeys mounted by huge men, with small urchins running alongside to give the animals a kick or a push now and then.

"Our winter clothing was growing uncomfortable, for we were now within the tropics. We also realized we had reached a land of wonders. Time will not permit me to tell you of our visit to Pompey's pillar and other places of great interest. Our next point was Cairo. Our trip to this place was a pleasant one by rail, in English coaches. We crossed the Nile twice. The native huts were wretchedly miserable, and the whole land seemed under a curse. We realized by contrast, as never before, what the religion of Christ can do for a nation."

At this point Stephen passed the further description of the journey on to Katie Ingersoll. That small lady continued the story as follows:

“What a time we had at Cairo! It was dreadful! Stephen and Charlie went to find a carriage, leaving us girls to guard the baggage. The natives were hanging around watching a chance to run off with our things. As fast as one was headed off, another would have hold of something. I felt like waving my umbrella wildly and screaming Shoo! At last we found comfortable quarters at the Shephardi Hotel, where we could rest from our exertions.

“The next day we commenced our sight-seeing, for you must know that in Cairo we were right in the midst of a long-ago world. I could talk all night describing our visit to Heliopolis, the beautiful gardens, and above all the Pyramids! But you can read about them any day in a dozen books of travel.

“Some more Oriental experiences awaited us as we went across the desert to Suez. We might have taken a short cut through the Suez Canal from Alexandria, but preferred the longer route for the sake of sight-seeing. But we were almost sorry we had done so when delays followed one another until patience was exhausted. But in spite of hunger and fatigue, for we had

taken no lunch with us, we lived through, and were soon on the good steamer Deccan. We had a glimpse of the big Suez Canal in the distance, also the place where the Israelites are supposed to have crossed the Red Sea.

"The Deccan was a noble ship, and soon we were steaming over the Red Sea aforesaid. We had Egypt, Nubia, and Abyssinia on our right, the Sinai peninsula and Arabia on the left. In a few days we reached the Indian Ocean. We stopped at Aden only one night, and wishing for at least a peep at the place, we went ashore by moonlight. The blackest of Africans were all about us with their boats, so Charlie and two of us girls jumped into one of their little boats, while Stephen took charge of the other two girls in another. What a lovely row it was! It will be one of the memories of my life! I wish I could stop and tell you all about that bit right out of fairy-land.

"The next morning found us on the Indian Ocean, headed due east for Bombay. We were not able to land there, on account of rough weather, and again we were on our way, this time crossing the Bay of Bengal. Our destination was Rangoon, which is not on the sea-coast, but twenty-five miles up the great Irrawaddy river."

"Katie has taken our party to the entrance of Burmah," said Ruth, "and I will try and give you an idea of how it looked to us.

"As we ascended the great river, we were filled with admiration at the lovely scenery. Burmah is indeed a beautiful land, diversified with rocks and valleys and mountain ranges. On every hand we saw flowers and palms and banyan trees, and as we neared Rangoon, the greatest pagoda in the world, the Shway Dagon, raised its golden dome imposingly before us. We paid it a visit one day, of which I will tell you later.

"As we went on shore we were impressed with the strangeness of our surroundings. The city is large, stretching for a mile along the bank of the river, and fairly bristles with pagodas, or idol temples. The dome-shaped roofs of these are surmounted with tiny bells, which give forth a sweet, tinkling music. The English residence portion of the city is very pleasant, and the driveway on the Avenue charming, but the main part is disagreeable, with narrow streets, which are horribly paved. We looked curiously at the people. They must be very religious, judging from the temples. Many women are seen worshipping, and teaching little children to bow down before the ugly idols,

each with its offering. We made our headquarters with the missionaries, as it afforded the best opportunity of seeing the strange sights understandingly. They made us very welcome, for the sake of our dear home land, for a glimpse of which they often long, no doubt.

“The sad condition of the women appealed the most strongly to our sympathies. Why, do you know, their religion denies that they have even a soul! Such sad faces as we saw on every hand!

“But I must tell you about our visit to the great Shway Dagon pagoda. This sacred shrine contains, or is supposed to contain, eight hairs of Gaudama, the chief god of Burmah. Up the broken stone steps, with their gabled roofs, we crept, until we reached the platform of the great pagoda, and wandered about among the smaller pagodas, temples, and idol-houses that surround it. Curious ornaments, great griffins, sacred bells and banners, every kind of tinsel and mosaic work, met our astonished eyes.

“Here was a worshipper lying flat on his face repeating his prayers; there another beat a gong, to let the spirits know that he had brought his offering. Men crowded to and fro, bells rang sweetly, and gongs sounded; on the upper terrace the English sentinels paced slowly, while

screaming crows and snarling dogs fought over the meats offered to the idols.

"But that wonderful 'Htee'! I shall never forget that vast umbrella of burnished gold, with its filigree work and costly jewels. Surmounting the lofty pagoda, it is seen for miles, and was the first object connected with the city that we saw as we came up the river.

"Among the curious things we notice here is the manner of eating. For a family of four there is perhaps a red lacquered dish, quite shallow, a foot and a half across, and placed on a little stand a foot high. They put a bowl of curry in the dish and pack boiled rice around it, while with pretty little china spoons each one dips the curry, which is very hot with spices, upon the rice. Then they roll the rice into little balls, and toss it into their mouths with their fingers.

"Let me describe a beautiful piece of fancy work that we saw. It was a table cover, and very striking. The design was a large peacock, with tail spread, embroidered in colored silks and gold and silver tinsel upon a dark ground. The work was nicely done. The peacock is the national bird of Burmah, as the eagle is with us.

"We saw some of the sacred books. They

are really beautiful, although I do not think you would have suspected that they were books. They were bundles of slips of bamboo, a half yard in length and four or five inches wide. The lettering was in the richest brown color, and all the space between was filled in with scarlet and gold lacquer. We could not read them, but I do not think that it was much loss.

“Perhaps you would like to know how the people dress. There are many varieties, but the costume of a young woman of the better class consists of a skirt embroidered in pretty colors; a short jacket, also embroidered; a bright scarf about the head, tied at the side, and falling over the shoulder. I have given you brief glimpses of Burman customs as we saw them in Rangoon. Lucy Gray will now take you to another point of view.”

“The very best thing in all our tour was our visit to dear Mrs. Ingalls, a missionary at Thongzai, forty miles from Rangoon. She is indeed a charming woman. How I wish I could make you see her to-night, with her bright cheery face, and hear her merry laugh, for she was as young as any of us in spite of her almost seventy years. She went to Burmah in 1851, with her husband, to do missionary work when the Orient was a good deal farther away than it is

now. In a few years Mr. Ingalls died, and she stayed and carried on all his work except the preaching. Their home had been in Rangoon, but she soon removed to Thongzai, where for years she lived quite alone, as far as white companionship went. She can hold you spell-bound by the hour with her vivid descriptions of the wonderful scenes through which she has passed.

“When she went home to America for a brief rest, some years ago, she was a woman whom all delighted to honor. On her way back, while in England, she was presented to Queen Victoria, who sent by her hand an autograph Bible to the Burman queen. This was before Theebaw’s day, when Upper Burmah came under British rule.

“Well, Mrs. Ingalls took the Bible, and settled down to her work in Thongzai. A young lady missionary had now become her companion, Miss Evans by name. After a while it became impressed upon Mrs. Ingall’s mind that she ought to go up to Mandalay, the royal capital of Burmah, and try to secure royal favor for Gospel work in that city. The Queen’s Bible would open the way for an audience at the palace. With her usual promptness, she took Miss Evans, her Bible woman, and some of

the school-girls, and started. This was in Mentong's reign, who preceded the bloody Theebaw.

"When she reached Mandelay, she sent word to the palace that a messenger had brought a gift from England's queen to the great queen that sits on the golden throne. An order came for her admittance; and now imagine Mrs. Ingalls, Miss Evans, and the Bible woman riding in an ox-cart to the palace. Forty men open the great golden gates, and they pass through a guard of eight hundred soldiers to the court-room of the first queen. The king had five other queens, but this one was highest in rank.

"The queen has not yet entered, but is momentarily expected. The Bible woman, maids of honor, all in the court-room but the two lady missionaries, prostrate themselves on the floor with their noses between their thumbs; for it is death for a Burman to look on royalty. Presently there is a rustling of robes, and her Majesty enters and seats herself on the golden throne. No one but women are present, but silence like death prevails in that company of prostrate forms.

"It is not allowable for any one to address the queen except through the first maid of honor. She speaks from her prostrate position saying,

“‘The white lady is here with the present from England’s queen for your most excellent majesty.’ The queen said graciously, ‘Let her bring it.’ So Mrs. Ingalls, bearing the precious Bible on a golden salver, went first; while Miss Evans followed with Judson’s Burman Bible on a red salver, the Bible woman bringing up the rear. The queen took the English Bible, turned it over, and said, ‘I cannot read it. Can the lady read the Burman book?’ In answer, Mrs. Ingalls read, in a loud clear voice, that all could hear, the first two chapters of Genesis, with the account of the creation. As she ceased, the queen signified her gracious approval, and the trio backed to their places, as they must always face royalty.

“By the hand of an attendant the queen sent Mrs. Ingalls three hundred rupees. She indignantly pushed it away, saying, ‘I am not a beggar.’ A dear little maid of honor, who was prostrate near her, sidled up, and said in the sweetest way, ‘Take it, lady. Our queen is compassionate, and it is our custom.’ So Mrs. Ingalls refused no longer. Miss Evans received one hundred rupees from the royal hands, and the money thus given by a heathen queen did good service for Christ in Mandelay.

“The queen asked many questions regarding

the English queen, the white teachers, and the new religion. It was hard to answer through another; so in her straightforward fashion Mrs. Ingalls asked that she might speak directly into the golden ears. Her Majesty smiled, and directed the maid of honor to keep silence, which mortally offended her.

“Refreshments were sent down from the queen at intervals, and the pretty little maid of honor, who had explained things before, whispered to the ladies that the dishes were gifts as well. There was an exquisite silver cup, which she showed us when we were at Thongzai, a fan, and other things.

“It was eight o'clock when they went into the palace, and they had been sitting there all day, till they were very tired. It was not etiquette for any one to leave before the queen should go. At last, about five in the afternoon, Mrs. Ingalls, taking courage from the great kindness with which she had been treated, asked leave to retire. At once her Majesty smiled graciously, and left the court, so that the audience might be broken up.”

Here Katie took up the thread of the story.

“When the queen had gone, the curiosity of the Burman women broke loose. ‘Why, her face is white, and her feet are black!’ they ex-

claimed, in astonishment. They took off her hat, examined her dress, and it really seemed as if they would pull her to pieces. At last she made her escape, and the news of the wonderful royal favor toward the white teacher flew all over Mandelay.

“The next day she went to see the second queen. Etiquette demanded that she give a day to each, but she was impatient at the loss of so much precious time. Stopping a moment to pay her respects to the first queen, she was greeted so kindly that she ventured to ask that she might see all the other five queens at once. The order was given, and with their maids of honor they gathered in the court-room of the second queen. A strange thing happened on this day. Mrs. Ingalls had been answering a great many questions about the teachings of the white man’s book. Suddenly the second queen turned to the Bible-woman and asked, ‘Have you embraced the new religion?’

“What a question for the poor woman to answer! For according to the law it was death for a Burman subject to forsake the national idol-worship. Being of the lower class, the presence of royalty had almost overwhelmed her. Mrs. Ingalls waited breathlessly for her reply. But she could not deny her Saviour.

She murmured her assent. Then a second question came. 'How do you worship? Pray to your God!'

"What would she do? There was silence for a moment, then, wonder of wonders! this native woman, led by the Spirit, raised herself to her knees, clasped her hands, lifted her face toward heaven, and prayed aloud to the invisible God. Such a prayer as it was! Mrs. Ingalls said that she seemed to utterly forget her surroundings, and to speak as to a near Presence. Just think of it! In that heathen court, in the midst of royal power, such a scene must have caused even the angels to look down in wonder. As the prayer ceased, the queen seemed deeply impressed, and gravely bowed her approval.

"The royal princess, the king's near relative and of rank fully equalling that of the first queen, asked for an audience the next day. She kept Mrs. Ingalls telling Bible stories, and afterward busied herself teaching the ladies of her court about Brother Adam and Sister Eve. But before dismissing the white teacher on the first day of audience, the royal princess said to her, 'I will preach to-morrow about our religion, and you must believe all I say.' They call all narration preaching. Mrs. Ingalls said, 'I tell no lies; if what you say is good, I will believe

it. But you preach to me to-morrow, and the next day I will preach to you.' So this was agreed upon, and after hearing the story of the god Gaudama, and his endless performances, Mrs. Ingalls told the assembled court the sweet and simple story of Jesus and his love.

"Did it do any good? We hardly know. Only this came in after days to Mrs. Ingalls: When Theebaw, the bloody, ascended the throne, he put to death nearly all the relatives of the late king. He spared the royal princess, because he wanted to marry her. But he was of a lower rank, and to escape, she had her hair shaved and became a Buddhist nun. Theebaw, in his rage, caused the hands of the maids of honor that had shorn her hair to be cut off, and the princess herself to be put in solitary confinement. No one could speak to her on pain of death. But an old woman told Mrs. Ingalls, when she visited Mandelay after the British were in possession, that they used to hear her, hour after hour, repeating the Bible stories she had learned from the white teacher. Perhaps the old, old story was a blessed reality to her. Who knows?"

Ruth rising said,

"It is time we closed the story of our wanderings, but I am sure you will be interested to

know what became of Queen Victoria's Bible. Some time after Theebaw had been dethroned, the missionaries at Mandalay sent word to Mrs. Ingalls, 'We have found the Bible you gave the queen. Do you want it?' Mrs. Ingalls hastened to Mandalay, anxious to trace back the matter. It seems a boy had brought it to the missionaries for sale. Recognizing its value, they bought it. Mrs. Ingalls tried to find the boy, but an interview with his mother, a stolid heathen woman, revealed the fact that he had been drowned the very day after he had sold the Bible. Where he found the foreign book she neither knew nor cared. The Burman Bible presented at the same time was never found.

"We have given a very slight glimpse of Burmah. The golden palace is in ruins; the golden thrones are fallen. But the pagodas still dot every hillside. Yet by their side the 'Jesus chapels' are rising. Thank God for what the Gospel is doing for Burmah!"

CHAPTER IV.

FIRST FRUITS.

As might have been expected, there followed a good deal of discussion among the Woodland Park church people about the new departure of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor. Good old Deacon Brown, with tears in his eyes, said to his wife that night, after their return from the meeting,

"I declare, Maria, I never expected to see missions with my own eyes as I did to-night. Just to hear those young things talking as if they really had been there! It's the best pair of missionary spectacles I ever had on."

So you see the telescope idea had struck him too.

"What I wondered at," said Mrs. Brown, doing the numberless things that occur just at that time to every one intent on housewifely concerns, "was where they found out so much. To hear them tell about their voyage, for instance, you would really think they had actually gone aboard the ships and travelled the whole way."

"That Mrs. Ingalls must be a pretty sharp woman, I declare! I'd go a good many miles to hear her tell about things she has seen over there in Burmah."

"Well," said Aunt Maria, winding the clock, and putting the cat's rug by the fire as a last duty before retiring, "we've always given to missions freely and gladly; and I hope we always shall. I was glad to see Aunt Patience there. She's tried me many a time by saying that charity begins at home; and that we never knew what was done with our money when it went so far away. But I do declare," she said, as reminiscences of the meeting flashed across her mind, "our young folks were clever to-night."

Katie Ingersoll had gone home with Ruth Ellis. When the girls were alone in Ruth's pretty room, where a fire was burning upon the grate, inviting to a cosey snuggle and talk within its soft glow, Katie said,

"Well, Ruth?" A mischievous "Well, Katie?" then both laughed. Ruth added, more gravely,

"I do believe our meeting was a success. Did you notice how everybody listened?"

"I had too much on my own mind. But I do

know one thing, Ruth, that if no one else was benefited, I was. I wouldn't give up what I have learned for anything. Why, I feel as if I had taken that journey step by step, as if I had shaken hands with Mrs. Ingalls, and looked into her face, and heard her tell her thrilling stories."

"It seemed as if we left out more than we told," said Ruth. "We had enough material about Mrs. Ingalls's work alone for two meetings at least. What a planner Mrs. Seymour is!"

"Mrs. Seymour? Indeed she is, dear woman!" said Katie enthusiastically. "I declare, Ruthie, I can't be with her five minutes without feeling a desire to grow; to stretch up somehow to a height way above me. I don't mean in feet and inches," she laughed, "although I would like to not always look up to other people."

"I understand you, dear," Ruth answered. "There is an atmosphere about Mrs. Seymour that is different from anything I ever felt with other folks. She seems to stimulate all the good there is in me."

"I thank God for her every day," said Katie. "We never could have had such a program without her aid. But we resolved to try before we knew about her helpfulness at all."

“Yes, Katie, and do you know I have been thinking that perhaps the Lord wants to teach us that when we are really willing to do our best for him, and undertake hard things, he will always raise up some helper, or some way out of the difficulty. I want to go on with our missionary journeys; don’t you, Katie?”

“Yes indeed, Ruth, and I hope the Society will vote for it. It all rests with them now, you know.”

Just at this moment Pastor Seymour was saying to his wife,

“How well your young folks acquitted themselves to-night! Charlie Carey, in particular, quite surprised me.”

“Why do you speak of him especially?” she said. “They all did equally well, I thought.”

“Because of a special anxiety I have been feeling for him, I suppose. He has been in great danger of drifting, and becoming a drone in the world of workers. He has fine natural abilities, and I was very glad to see him take hold so well in the preparation for this exercise.”

“He worked faithfully looking up facts, and compiling them for the description of the journey. If I mistake not, Katie Ingersoll is a powerful balance wheel to this tall youth.”

"Hers may be a saving influence, then. I am greatly impressed with the reserve force of that young Stephen Hollister. He told me his history to-day."

"He was the quietest of the six," said Mrs. Seymour, "and I was a little afraid he would not make his part of the program attractive. But he surprised and gratified me very much to-night."

"He is not as brilliant nor as quick as some of the other young men, but he has enough dogged perseverance and clear grit to take him to almost anything he may aim for. He is slow in developing, but I prophesy a grand future for him. The young people do not appreciate his real power, although he has their thorough respect."

"A good many of the church people were out," said the pastor's wife. "I hope it may give some of them, at least, a clearer vision of Christian duty."

"I hope so, for they are not, as a whole, interested in Foreign Missions. But this may be an entering wedge, and it is in your hands, Alice, to do a great work among our young members."

"Ruth Ellis is a noble girl, Henry, and carries the Christian Endeavor work on her heart.

I am glad she is its President. There are great possibilities in her nature."

"She loves you, Alice, and you can lead her as no one else can. May the Lord help us both in this great work for him!"

"Amen!" said Alice Seymour softly, as she knelt for her nightly prayer.

The Christian Endeavor Society of Woodland Park church was a large one, and considered itself very flourishing. It had its full complement of committees, and its machinery seemed to be running at full speed most of the time. New members were being drawn in, both active and associate, showing that the Lookout Committee was alert and at work. The Literary Society, meeting every two weeks, was enthusiastic, with a large attendance. Its varied programs, well carried out, were proving a means of culture and a bond of interest between the members. Once in a while, they gave entertainments to raise money for some benevolent object. The Missionary Committee was always finding some destitute children to be clothed for Sunday-school, or some case of need demanding assistance. It became a proverb in the city that the young people of the Woodland Park church knew of every load of household goods that came into town, and almost be-

fore new-comers were fairly settled, they would be called upon, cordially welcomed, and invited to Woodland Park church, unless they had other preferences.

All this was praiseworthy, and a great factor toward the large congregations and the prosperous condition of things generally. The young people grew up with the idea of work, and there were few idlers in this church vineyard.

Yet, as Ruth Ellis had said, there was something lacking. The routine of work was becoming machine-like. The prayer-meeting pledge was kept after a fashion, but the active members lacked the inspiring influence of the Holy Spirit. Many would content themselves with merely repeating a passage of Scripture, not for any preciousness in it to themselves, but for the sake of keeping their pledge, in form at least. Much of the singing served the same purpose; one of the suggestions of the adversary having been that to announce hymns for use during the meeting would cancel all obligation for further service. The prayer-meeting itself was growing irksome in its requirements to many, and Ruth had heard it whispered that some of the members wished to have the pledge of attendance no longer a condition of active membership. In fact, the breath of Divine life was

greatly needed in the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor of Woodland Park church.

"There is endeavor enough, I am sure," said Ruth, one day, as she was discussing the matter with Auntie Brown, as Deacon Brown's wife was familiarly called, "but how much of it is Christian in the sense it ought to be is more than I know. What can we do about it?"

"Keep on praying, dear. There's nothing the devil likes so well as a great show of activity among the Lord's people, when the Holy Spirit isn't in it. Sometimes I think he bustles about right in the midst of them, making the dust fly so that they can't see he is there. But praying hasn't lost its power, Ruth."

Katie Ingersoll was one of Ruth's real helpers; and so was Stephen Hollister. She knew she could depend upon them, and several others, to do all in their power to carry out the true spirit of the prayer-meeting pledge. There was always a difference in the atmosphere when one of these faithful-hearted ones was the appointed leader. With too many of the others, the exercises were a mere form, and the meeting felt the deadening influence.

Pastor Seymour was beginning to see the real state of things. As was natural, he had at first been misled by the great show of activity

on the part of the young people, and had rejoiced that he had such an army of helpers. But when he tried to get help from them in advancing the spiritual interests of the church, they were found sadly wanting, as a whole.

In view of the situation, it was not strange that Katie's missionary idea was not received with much appreciation of its real scope. The comments upon the evening's program were many and varied.

"It was certainly interesting," said Stella Carr, one of the most active members on the Social Committee at the time, "and I don't see where they learned so much. But what is Ruth Ellis driving at now, I wonder!"

She was standing in the post-office talking to Dorothy Dutton, Deacon Brown's granddaughter. Home influences were a better factor with her than in Stella's case, and she answered,

"It was to inform us about something a little farther off than Woodland, I suppose. Mrs. Seymour helped them, I heard."

"Of course they couldn't have done all that by themselves, and it must have been a lot of work. I think we have about all we can do now, without taking on any more. We are to vote something in regard to it, you know."

"Well, I am sure that it is not only interest-

ing, but teaches us about things we couldn't or wouldn't find out in any other way. For my part, it seemed as if my idea of the world widened out, somehow. It isn't every day we can go abroad without any expense or any trouble except a little study. I shall vote for the missionary journeys."

"It's only a way of sugar-coating a foreign mission pill," said Stella, with a sneer. "There's more work at home than we can do, without reaching across the ocean for more."

The very expression Mrs. Seymour had used! However, Dorothy, although she felt there was something un-Christlike in the spirit and speech of her companion, hardly knew how to answer her. She was very young in the Master's service, and was not wise in meeting the various sophisms of the evil one. But she simply said,

"There is certainly enough to do, Stella, but it seems as if Jesus fed the hungriest ones when he was on earth. We ought to learn about the needs everywhere, I think."

Stella gave her head a little toss, but a friend coming up just then the conversation ceased. But a seed-thought had lodged in Dorrie's heart, which was destined to grow and bring forth fruit.

Later in the day, a group of three or four

young men, associate members of the Society, chanced to come together. The talk turned, as was natural, upon the meeting. As we come within ear-shot, James Sewall is saying,

“It’s a grand idea! I have always wanted to travel, but the poverty of my purse has been in the way. To be sure, I don’t know but I should prefer Europe to these old pagan countries; still, one ought to be informed about all the four quarters of the globe we live on.”

“It is really quite a refreshing departure from our routine literary exercises,” said Gordon Stanley, an embryo lawyer. “I shall be glad to bid farewell to Longfellow, Whittier, and the other big authors for a time, and study human nature in its various environments.”

“With your name, Gordon, you ought to be interested in Oriental explorations,” laughed John Carpenter. “That program was carried out capitally last night. I shouldn’t object to several more of them.”

“I tell you, boys,” said Gordon Stanley, “there’s something behind all this, more than mere imaginary travel for the sake of information. The missionary side of it will be apt to come out strong, if they keep it up.”

“What’s the harm?” said John Carpenter; “as long as they make it entertaining and in-

structive, let's go in for it. A dose of missions once in a while won't poison us. You know I don't profess anything in a religious point of view, but its my opinion that Jesus Christ was a good deal of a foreign missionary, when he came down from heaven to this wicked old earth. I don't think any of us fellows would fancy taking up a residence at the Five Points in New York, or even Taylor street in Woodland; but it must have been a good deal worse than that for him."

"John Carpenter among the preachers!" laughed James Sewall. "I shall await further theological developments with interest," and with a mocking bow the young man walked away, and the group separated.

Presently, as he went slowly down the street, the mocking laugh still ringing in his ears, John Carpenter was overtaken by Stephen Hollister, who was just released from duty by the close of banking hours. Stephen had lately been put on the Lookout Committee, and having a higher idea of its duties than the mere addition of members to the Society, he cast about for some one whom he could also induce to take service under his Master. Stephen was not intimately acquainted with the young men in the Society. He rarely fitted in with their ideals. But in

looking for some one to pray for, and influence, he had felt John Carpenter to be in some sense a possible congenial spirit. Who shall say it was not the Lord who brought them together at this juncture?

It was a little hard for Stephen, whom life had made reticent and self-centred, to slip his hand familiarly through John's arm, and walk along with him in the free and easy manner that such an advance would necessarily involve. John himself was surprised when he saw that his companion was Stephen Hollister, who had hitherto held himself aloof in a shy, reserved fashion. But queer as it was, John felt an odd sense of sympathy with the young man beside him.

The conversation began lightly, on every-day topics; but as Stephen was not apt at small-talk, and as his stronger nature took the lead, graver topics were somehow introduced, they scarcely knew how.

Naturally the meeting of the evening before claimed attention, and John aired his sentiments much as he had a few minutes before, carefully avoiding, however, any reference to Jesus Christ.

Stephen answered frankly,

"I tell you, John, the preparation for that

one meeting has revolutionized my ideas regarding some things. There's been a good deal of dig and grind in my life, and I have had little time or chance to know about other people in the world. You understand what I mean. I have given almost all my thought and effort for Stephen Hollister's benefit and advancement. The Lord claims more than that of his followers, and I have just learned that my vision has been very limited in its range."

"Who'll look out for Number One if we don't ourselves?" asked John.

"That is true, in a sense. But we get selfish and narrow if we never look beyond Number One. Now, I professed, a few years ago, to become a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ; and it shows how stupid I am that it has taken me all these years to learn the alphabet of true service; looking not alone on our own things, but also on the things of others."

"I can't see that Christians are very different from other people in this respect," said John. "I have known some, of course, and I say frankly to you, Stephen, that it is this paltry half dozen that have kept my faith in Christianity from absolute wreck."

Stephen stood appalled at this glimpse into one unconverted man's heart. Could it be pos-

sible that he, Stephen Hollister, had been a stumbling-block? Why, he had prided himself that he had thus far carved out his own success, that he had never yielded to the current temptations of young men; that he was rigidly upright and pure. But it had all been self, self, nothing but self. The thought filled him with the keenest pain. When he spoke again, his voice was so moved with emotion that John Carpenter turned and looked into his face with surprise. And these were his words:

“John, I see where I’ve been terribly wrong. I have been so intent on my own way upward, that I quite forgot that I might be pushing others out of the safe path. Forgive me, John, and let me help you on to the firm ground where the footing is sure.”

This was such an unexpected turn to the conversation that John also was struck dumb with astonishment. At last he stammered,

“Why, Stephen, I never meant you, old fellow! You have been a bright and shining light to the rest of us, putting our foolish ways to shame very often.”

“Yes,” said Stephen, quite roused out of his reserve, “much like the moon, whose light has no warmth in it. God helping me, I am not going to shine just for myself any longer.

Why, the vastness of the world-field as it was shown to me in our preparation for that meeting, and my reading in the same line since, frightens me. We have been looking at what lies at our very feet."

"Now, honor bright, Stephen, you are in the ring and must know; isn't the new departure a boom for foreign missions?"

"Certainly," said Stephen frankly. "I thought we made that plain enough. We want to see for ourselves, as far as we can, the countries outside of our own; learn of their religions, their habits and customs, the countries themselves with their physical features. Then we can better understand the work God calls us to do for these benighted ones."

"I thought so," said John Carpenter. "But, as I told Gordon Stanley, missions aren't poison, and I am sure Jesus Christ was a missionary."

"The Great Missionary, John. And he left the command for all his disciples to be missionaries to those around them, and even to the uttermost parts of the earth."

As they talked, they reached the corner where their ways divided. They paused a moment, and Stephen said,

"John, won't you pledge yourself for Christ?"

Almost angrily the young man turned quickly on his heel.

“I am in no mood for pledges at present. When I am, I will let you know.”

Stephen went to his room, utterly heartsick and discouraged. His very first attempt at personal work for the Master, and how sadly he must have blundered!

It might have comforted him somewhat, and put a little more faith in his prayers, could he have known that in John Carpenter’s ears his own words, tender, pleading, “John, won’t you pledge yourself for Christ?” were ringing; and that even though he was striving to shut out the sound, in ceaseless reiteration he heard them over and over. When he retired to his room, hoping to forget them in sleep, in the darkness and the silence they came more distinct than before. When tardy slumber came, the same sound floated through his dreams.

In the morning he arose, wretched, unrefreshed. His conscience was now fully roused, and he was obliged to face the question, “Why will I not pledge myself for Christ?” His life passed in review before him—his sins, his weakness to resist temptation, his bosom friends who were not helping him upward. All day the struggle continued. He was accountant in a

large mercantile establishment; and as he mechanically added the interminable rows of figures, all over the page the question stared at him, "Won't you pledge yourself to Christ?"

The night found him haggard with the fierceness of the struggle. At home, during supper, his mother feared he was sick; but pleading the headache which was the result of the mental conflict, he sought his room.

In the solitude, alone with his Maker, John Carpenter answered the question. The stubbornness gave way, and from his soul he said,

"O Christ, I gladly pledge my life to thy service!"

Peace came, full and abundant—heart-rest, sweet indeed after the conflict; and angels rejoiced over a soul new-born into the kingdom.

Was not this a sort of first-fruits of the first missionary journey?

CHAPTER V.

PARTS AND COUNTERPARTS.

CECILE CAREY was a girl of very even temperament. She looked with calm curiosity on impulsive people, who were either down in the valleys or on the mountain tops. Naturally sweet tempered, it was not hard for her to win a position of popularity and float along with the current, never surprising her companions by unlooked-for developments. Conversion did not make much outward change, for it was more like a germ which would grow and show its fruits afterward. She was so accustomed to feeling on good terms with herself and the world, that her conscience had an easy time of it. Her conversion was undoubtedly genuine, and her interests had undergone a thorough change. But the deeper questions of Christian living would need to be learned gradually.

The Society of Christian Endeavor was very dear to her heart. She was careful to keep her pledge as an active member, but it was rather a formal observance than a soul-absorbing one.

Still, Cecile was growing—a little dwarfed in some directions, perhaps, but truly reaching toward the light.

Katie Ingersoll roused her rather suddenly from her preconceived ideas of Christian duty, on the afternoon when she told the girls of her new convictions and her plan for grafting foreign missions into Christian Endeavor work. As we have seen, Cecile's bright mind grasped the thought of the telescope as contrasted with mere microscopic vision, and with her, action was a foregone conclusion to conviction. As she studied to prepare her part of that memorable first program, her vision grew keen to note past neglect of duty. Never again was she heard to express any lack of interest in work abroad.

And what about Charlie Carey? At first, as we have seen, he went into the matter solely for Katie Ingersoll's sake. Perhaps, before this, there had been a doubt in some minds as to the genuineness of his conversion. It may be that he had sometimes doubted it himself. But the devil is very busy with some people because by natural temperament their hearts offer suitable soil for the sowing of tares.

It must be there was a little of the real article we call religion in Charlie Carey's heart, for

his conscience made itself heard altogether too often for his comfort. There was a leaning toward right living, a drawing toward Christly things; but the innate indolence of his nature abhorred the continual conflict between impulses Godward and temptations downward. Charlie's good angel must have been kept hard at work fanning the tiny spark kindled by the Divine Spirit. Such a selfish sort of living as it was! He did not realize it, however, until Katie's hand applied the telescope to his eyes, which gave him a glimpse, revealing not only a wider field of vision, but in contrast the meanness and littleness of his past life. He astonished himself, as well as others, by the way he took hold of his part of the preparation for that voyage to missionary lands. That very night, after returning from the church, alone in his room and on his knees before God, he vowed to live henceforth a better, nobler life, to reach out to others a helping hand.

Perhaps it may seem unnatural to some of you that such results should so speedily follow the new departure. But, if the Word speaks truly, we know that Christ honors service done in his name; not always after dreary waiting, but according to our faith.

Stephen Hollister went to the Christian En-

deavor meeting the next Sunday afternoon in a discouraged frame of mind. His shortcomings had been revealed to him; and in his very first effort to crawl out of his shell of reserve, and help John Carpenter, he had met with a positive rebuff that chilled his very heart. He was nothing but a poor, blundering workman, and the Master surely could make little use of him.

It chanced to be the monthly Consecration meeting. Ruth Ellis herself was the leader. Her own heart was glowing with new love and desire for a broader Christian life. Was it fancy, she wondered, that there was a warmer atmosphere, an increase of longing for better things?

Poor Stephen had taken a back seat, and with bowed head was wondering what he could say without uncovering all the torture and unrest in his soul. You see, he had so long cherished the habit of reserve, saying that he would not wear his heart upon his sleeve for the crows to pick at, that it had become second nature. Consecration? O, how he longed for it, in fuller, deeper measure; and yet he dared not trust his voice to tell his fellow Christians so. He could hardly credit his ears when he heard a familiar voice say,

“I have pledged myself to Christ’s service,

not for a week or a year, but for my whole life. Will you take me as a brother, in His Name? Not in my own strength, for that is weakness, but in the strength of the Lord, do I hope to prove a faithful servant."

Stephen lifted his head to see John Carpenter, a new light on his face, a new erectness in his attitude, stand and make this public confession of new-found faith in Christ. Down went Stephen's head again, this time to hide a rush of happy tears. God had blessed his imperfect effort, after all; and oh, the joy and peace that came into his heart! A thrill went over the entire assembly. They were not expecting such a thing, and, I fear, had not been asking, many of them at least, for such an immediate blessing. The meeting took on a new tone; voices that had not been heard, save to repeat Scripture or to announce hymns, gave voluntary testimony of earnest desire for better things.

Surprises were not at an end. Charlie Carey, who had always remained an associate member because he would not assume the obligations of active membership, told in broken words of new resolves, and also asked to be taken in among the working Christians. Almost before Charlie sat down, Stephen was on his feet, and his long

pent up feeling poured forth in words that astonished not only himself, but all present. His full determination to live no longer for self, but for all in need, was the key-note of what he said.

Perhaps you think this is the beginning of a sweeping revival and work of grace in Woodland Park Church. It would be gratifying to record such a fact, if it were true. But two or three drops do not make a shower, although they sometimes precede the plentiful rain.

Yet it was evident that new influences were at work. When the question came up for consideration at a called meeting of the Society, whether they should continue their missionary tours, there was a lively discussion. Quite a large number argued that they could not undertake more work in justice to themselves. A few came out boldly in opposition to the new departure; but on the other hand there were quite a number that were converts to this phase of the duty question.

Stephen Hollister's strong words came just before the vote was to be taken.

"Why, friends," he said, "when you think that there are eight hundred and fifty-five million heathen in the world, one Protestant to every nine of the world's population, and one Protestant missionary to every 200,000 souls, it

seems as if God's children ought to wake up, or not dare to say they are Christians. Jesus said, 'Go into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature.' If that 'Go' of our Lord doesn't mean the Christian Endeavor Society of Woodland Park Church, pray whom does it mean?"

Ruth called for the vote. Two-thirds of the members stood up in favor of the new measure; while of the remaining third only half a dozen had the courage to rise in defence of their position.

After some discussion, it was decided to engraft the missionary tours upon the Literary Society, taking the place of the usual program once in two months. The other alternate Friday evenings were to be devoted to literary exercises, as formerly. Six of the members, either active or associate, three gentlemen and three ladies, were to be chosen for each missionary program; and it should be their duty to present, as vividly as possible, the lands beyond the sea. For the next missionary evening, two months hence, six were appointed, as follows: the pastor, Rev. Henry Seymour, John Carpenter, Henry Peterson, Dorothy Dutton, Susie Jefferson, and Mary Tillinghast. The parsonage was to be the headquarters for information,

and as they had two months, instead of two weeks, for preparation, great things were expected of them.

There was considerable demurring on the part of some of the appointed tourists; but their objections were finally overruled, and the matter settled. It was arranged that they should select their own country, in consultation with Mrs. Seymour, and also their route of travel.

Dorothy Dutton ran in one day to see Aunt Patience Kelderby, with whom she was a prime favorite. We have referred to Aunt Patience before, but she is enough of a character to repay closer acquaintance. She was Deacon Brown's half-sister, and therefore really Aunt Patience to Dorothy; and the rest of the world called her so, because, somehow, the name fitted.

She was a nurse, and had a rare tact in caring for the sick that amounted to positive genius. So it was no wonder that her time was claimed almost constantly. The Woodland physicians relied on Aunt Patience as their right hand helper in critical cases. She was never known to be sleepy when wakefulness was necessary; and in all places where steadiness of nerve and cool self-possession were needed she was not found wanting.

At intervals, when it was possible, she would

come home to rest. Her manner of resting was as characteristic as her method of working. If she had been with a case that needed night and day care, so that sleep had been out of the question, she would, as soon as released from duty, come home, shut herself in her room, and sleep straight through two nights and a day, and come out as fresh as a lark, and ready for the next term of service. She owned a pleasant home of her own, and had a family living in part of the house, for the sake of having things cared for in her frequent absences. A very cosy suite of rooms she reserved for her own use; and here Dorrie found her one December morning.

Dorrie liked to talk to Aunt Patience. Her shrewd common sense, and her quaint way of putting things, made her conversation very enjoyable. Like all strong natures, Aunt Patience had very positive ideas about things in general, and yet, if she could see a good sound reason for changing her opinion, she was not ashamed to do so. "A wise man changes his mind; a fool, never;" she would quote; adding, "A really wise man would be careful how he made up his mind in the first place."

Aunt Patience was a member of Woodland Park Church, and a thorough-going Christian. Not a few dying mortals had found her a com-

fortable person to have by their bedsides; for she could pray for their souls, as well as minister to their bodies.

A person's opinions are not to be hastily judged. A study of environments, past as well as present, must enter into the account. Aunt Patience was no believer in foreign missions. Very wrong of her, you say. But her early training had not turned her sympathies in that direction. And then came the love passage of her life; but Death turned the leaf and closed that chapter forever. Through varied experiences she early drifted into her life-work of caring for the suffering; and since that time her vision had mainly been bounded by the walls of sick-rooms and the varying symptoms of those under her charge. She had a great heart, capable of the fullest sympathies; and this made her voice attune readily to sensitive nerves, and her touch as tender as a mother's. The motherhood denied her found expression in her chosen work.

Now, do you wonder that her vision was microscopic? It had always been bounded by narrow walls. So, when an appeal was made for foreign missions, it found no answering chord in her heart. The needs about her filled her entire horizon.

But Aunt Patience had been one of the audience at the church on the evening of that first missionary journey. She had always longed to see foreign lands, and was vastly entertained as the young people took her step by step with them on their voyage to Burmah.

She went with Mrs. Ingalls to the golden palace, and was spell-bound at the strange happenings at that heathen court. The power of God over a pagan heart, as instanced in the story of Mah Oung, the Bible woman, was a revelation. It was her first peep through a telescope, and her eyes, used only to the microscope, could scarcely take in the vastness revealed. She was confused and bewildered.

Like many others, she went home to think. Thinking led her to her knees. Prayer brought, at first, only an increase of her perplexities. She was ignorant, you see, and the Lord had to teach her many things before her vision could be made clear. She was thoroughly honest and sincere, and this, as it always does, made it a foregone conclusion that she was to have a revelation of God's will in the matter.

In this frame of mind Dorothy found her. Without many preliminaries, Aunt Patience plunged into the subject nearest her heart.

“Dorrie, child, when are you young folks going travelling again?”

“Travelling, Aunt Patience? What do you mean?”

“Why, just as you did the other night; Charlie Carey and the rest of them.”

“Oh, that sort of travelling! In two months from that Friday evening.”

“So long? Maybe I can’t attend then; but I will if I can, sure. Say, Dorothy, did you have any idea there was so much over yonder?”

“Over where, auntie?” and Dorothy looked bewildered.

“Over where you went the other night; where that missionary lady lives, and that Bible woman.”

“Oh, I understand! Of course I knew the heathen lived there, and that missionaries were sent to them, and that we ought to give our money, but it never seemed a bit real before.”

“That’s just it!” exclaimed Aunt Patience. “Dorrie, I’ve been a wicked woman!”

“Why, Aunt Patience!” gasped Dorothy, aghast at this new revelation.

“Yes, a wicked woman. I’ve refused to give the money the Lord let me earn, made all sorts of excuses, because I was such a blind simpleton as not to be able to see that God has

work to do outside our own dooryards. But that meeting converted me, I think, or will, before I get through with it."

"I have felt differently, too, Aunt Patience," said Dorothy, with a sweet humility. "I know so little about it yet, that I was glad that they put me on for the next tour, so that I could learn more. Mrs. Seymour is to help us, you know."

"Yes, she's a blessed good woman; I can see that by her face. Well, learn all you can, child, and come and teach me. What trip is your company to take? I'd like to hear more about that Mrs. Ingalls."

"It isn't decided yet; but I do not suppose we shall go to Burmah. There are so many countries to learn about, that we can only give glimpses of each one."

"There'll be a blessing to the young folks, Dorothy, and to all of us in this thing. I've been reading the Testament with new spectacles. Last night I came to the verse, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.' I had to stop right there. I had read it before, and heard it read, hundreds of times, of course; but it was all Greek until last night, and then I was fairly frightened. I feel as if I had been a heathen myself."

"But you won't be long, at this rate," said Dorothy, smiling. "I fancy we all needed converting."

Mrs. Seymour was busy, that very morning, getting her plans and material ready for the six tourists who were to come that evening. Although the pastor was to be the leader of the party, she could save him much precious time by arranging the details of the tour. Much she wondered what manner of individuals the present five would be, and if they would work as enthusiastically and unitedly as the first six. Her heart sung a glad thanksgiving over the early first-fruits, and almost constant prayer went up that this might also be blessed.

Of the six, only the pastor, Dorothy Dutton, and John Carpenter are old acquaintances. What of the others?

Henry Peterson was a book-keeper in the same establishment with John Carpenter, who had induced him to become an associate member of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor some time before. He consented to join on account of the social advantages it would give him. Henry was a good-natured fellow, whose love for his mother kept him from the vices which tempt young men, and made him a church-goer. Personally, he had little interest

in religious matters, but consented to take his turn among the missionary tourists for rather mixed reasons. First, he was asked to fill the place, and he did not like to be considered a shirk. He could describe a journey, he thought, if he had some data to draw upon. On the whole it might be a pleasant thing, especially as his young friends were in it.

Susie Jefferson was very much of a butterfly. Her father had plenty of money, and she was his only child. She was always on the lookout for a good time, "fun," as she called it. Downright hard work, either mental or physical, her soul abhorred. It was quite a wonderment to Ruth Ellis how she could ever be made to bear a respectable part in the program. However, she had great faith in Mrs. Seymour's powers, and hoped for the best. It required a deal of coaxing to persuade Miss Susie to be one of the six.

Mary Tillinghast was more hopeful material. She was an active member of the Christian Endeavor Society, and had good sterling common sense. She had been rather a "machine" member of late, as Ruth Ellis called it, but in her case there was a conscience to work upon, and a tiny spark of the Divine love.

Quite a contrast, Mrs. Seymour thought, to

her first six, as the prospective travellers gathered in her snugery. She missed dear Ruth's earnest face, Katie Ingersoll's enthusiasm, and in fact some good trait in every one of them, for they had become like old friends.

There was a different atmosphere about the group. Mrs. Seymour was glad that her husband was at the helm of affairs. Dorothy Dutton, with her sweet face and her simple, unpretending manner, won her completely. John Carpenter also impressed her strongly. But Henry Peterson, with his foppish air of self-consciousness, and Susie Jefferson, with her bangs and her bangles, and giggling over everything, were almost more than she could endure. But she planned the work as best she could, and left the result in the hands of the Lord. The young people were to prepare their parts from the material given them, and meet her again at the end of a month to report progress.

Henry Peterson and Susie, as kindred spirits, left the parsonage together. Dorothy Dutton and Mary Tillinghast were near neighbors, and company for each other. John Carpenter offered his services as escort to the two girls, and thus the different members of the group took homeward ways.

John Carpenter was not a ladies' man. He

had gone out very little into general society; but although this was the first time he had been thrown directly into the company of these girls, he found the walk, somehow, very pleasant.

CHAPTER VI.

A TOPIC PARTY.

"I NEVER can do it!" said Susie Jefferson, biting her pencil, as she sat in her father's library, making a weak attempt to write out her part of the proposed journey. Her soliloquy would have been amusing, had it not disclosed such pitiful shallows in her nature.

"What's the use, anyhow! I never would write compositions at school, if I could help it, and I am sure I am not going to bother myself into a headache just for the sake of that old meeting! There isn't any fun in it! I thought we were going to get together and write out what we were to say, but we only meet once in a while, and every one of them is dull, except Henry Peterson. I'd give it up if it wasn't for him.

"Oh, I know what I'll do!" and acting upon a sudden impulse, she gathered up books, pencil, and tablet, and was soon ringing the bell at 43 Floral Avenue.

Ruth herself came to the door. Susie's greet-

ings were very effusive. She had an ax to grind, and as long as she could make Ruth serve her purpose she would be all sweetness and affection. "Good-morning, Ruth, dear!" and the sound of kisses echoed through the hall. "How well you are looking! Are you in a jolly good humor, ready to help a friend in distress?"

Ruth's heart sank. She divined in a moment Miss Susie's errand. Hers was a busy life.

Her father was a physician with a large practice, and she was her mother's right hand dependence in many things. Then she had an endless amount of church work to look after, and beside it all, a special course in music that demanded hours of practice. But the new plan had grown very dear, and rather than risk a failure she would try and supplement Susie's laziness and incompetency.

She led the way to her own room. Susie threw off her wrappings in a free and easy fashion, and proceeded to explain what was expected of her in the next program.

"You know I always was stupid in composition-writing, Ruthie, dear; and in fact in everything else," she added, with a little giggle. "You could always do those things so well! I can show you just what Mrs. Seymour gave me to do, and if you will only write it out for

me, I can read it, and everything will go off all right."

A modest request, truly! Ruth's cheeks flamed, but she answered quietly,

"Would that be honest, Susie?"

That young lady tossed her head. "Why not? It isn't all our own, anyway. We draw it from books and papers, and nobody asks whose work it is. I will tell Mrs. Seymour you helped me, and that will make it all right."

Ruth still hesitated, and Susie added,

"If you don't I'll throw up the part, and somebody else will have to be found in my place."

Many thoughts flashed through Ruth's mind. The originality of the work was not all-important, as Susie had said. Then, although not a very helpful associate member, yet there she was, and if she should drive her away by a refusal of help, they would lose the little influence for good she might possess.

"If you will tell me all about your part, I will try and assist you," said Ruth, with a sigh at the thought of the lost practice hours.

So the little writing table was drawn out, and the long morning was spent by Ruth in putting in shape Susie's rather crude ideas of the matter. She finished just before noon, and Susie, most voluble in her protestations of grat-

itude, departed, triumphant in the thought that Ruth had done her work for her.

Ruth herself did not find much satisfaction in the matter. "I am glad to help," she thought, "if it had only been some one worth helping." Then she was self-rebuked at her want of charity, and tried to put it all out of her mind.

But the day was sadly disjointed. The practice must go altogether, or be stolen from other imperative duties. On the morrow she must meet her teacher for her lesson. She felt that something was wrong, and after dinner laid her perplexity before her mother.

Mrs. Ellis was wise-hearted, and was in true sympathy with her daughter's aims and ambitions. "Yes, dear, it was certainly very trying, and I appreciate your desire to be helpful. But you cannot ignore your duties to yourself. It would have been better to have told Miss Susie, in a pleasant way, of course, that your practice must occupy the morning hours, and have appointed a time in which you could help her, if you felt it your duty to do so. Evidently she wanted to shift the work from her shoulders to yours, and the Lord does not require us to stand imposition of that sort. Besides, it was not a real kindness to the girl."

"It was not altogether for Susie's sake, mamma. We cannot afford a failure in our next program."

"There is plenty of time to provide a substitute, if Susie was not willing to wait your leisure. Then we have a right to insist that you make the most of the advantages which we provide for you, at no small expense. So, dear, you see there were two sides to the 'ought' that time."

"I do see, mamma, and will know better after this."

The Literary Society of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor with which our story has to do was large and flourishing, as has been said before. For some time they had been having studies of special authors—a Longfellow evening, a Whittier evening, and so on. This had become a little monotonous, and a committee was appointed at about the time of the new departure, to suggest something different. When I tell you that this committee consisted of Ruth Ellis, Katie Ingersoll, and Stephen Hollister, you will not be surprised at their report.

They recommended a topic party for the next literary. Five topics were given, as follows:

Telescopes.

Microscopes.

Foreign Travel.

Mrs. Ingalls.

Burmah.

Each gentleman was to choose a partner for the fifteen minutes given to each topic, and talk on that subject the allotted time. A bell would ring for change of topic, and new partners were to be chosen all around. The topics were given out in advance, so that if any wished to inform themselves beforehand, they would have opportunity to do so.

The novelty of the idea took. Some, indeed, wondered at the choice of topics; but on the whole there was less opposition than the committee feared. Katie whispered to Ruth, "What a grand way to make them digest our program!"

It would have been very entertaining to have stood in the room that evening, with enlarged powers of hearing, so that all the varied conversations could have been taken in understandingly. Stephen Hollister sought Katie Ingersoll for the first topic.

"I don't quite understand the drift of this, Katie," he said, "even if I was on the committee. I know all the topics bear some relation

to foreign missions. What have telescopes to do in that direction?"

This, as you know, was familiar ground to Katie. So he, last of all the original six, heard the story of the inception of the missionary plan. He had been through just the experiences to make it strike him with great force.

"That meeting, with the preparation it involved, was a telescope to me," he said. "It worked both ways. I saw the needs, stretching out and away to the very ends of the earth, and in contrast my life seemed selfish and worthless, because all my striving had begun and ended with myself."

"The idea has meant a great deal to me," answered Katie, "only I have reached this point: the Lord has put plenty of telescopes in our way, where we can use them, if we have the mind; and so there is no excuse for a narrow vision. But didn't you notice, when we studied up our program, we left out as much that was interesting as we put in? Let us use some of it in making telescopes to-night."

In another part of the room Henry Peterson and Susie Jefferson were topic partners. "Oh, dear, what a funny subject!" she giggled, her frizzes and ribbons flying; "what can we make of it?"

"We are expected to use it in improving our minds, I suppose," laughed her companion. "Miss Susie, what is a telescope?"

"Are you really playing teacher? What fun! A telescope," she lisped, with her head on one side and finger in her mouth, like a bashful school-girl, "a telescope, why it is a long tube you look at the stars with."

Henry picked up a paper lying near, rolled it into shape, and handed it to her. "Is that a telescope?"

"Oh, no," she said. "It must have glass in it."

"It must be a telescope," he rejoined, taking it from her hand and adjusting it to his eye in her direction, "for through it I can see a star."

Leaving these two brilliant endeavors after nonsense, we hear the tinkle of the bell announcing the next topic and change of partners. This brought Lucy Gray and John Carpenter together. He was also mystified at the first two topics, and his former partner had not been able to give him light on telescopes. So the two subjects were talked about in connection, and he too learned the story with which our readers are so familiar.

"I shall have food for thought," he said. "Microscopes and Telescopes! both necessary,

but one would not wish to be either altogether near-sighted or far-sighted. We should seek for a general vision, able to see things at hand and those farther off. Thank you for your explanation, Miss Lucy. It is worth a great deal to me."

Foreign travel caused quite a loosening of tongues. Gordon Stanley claimed Ruth Ellis as partner for this topic.

"Do you ever expect to go abroad?" he asked, in his most graceful manner.

"Yes," said Ruth, smiling, "we went abroad the other night."

"Oh, I don't mean in that fashion, although you young ladies certainly made that trip very interesting; but really to Europe, and that sort of thing."

"I don't know," said Ruth. "If that ever should come as one of my good things in life, I am sure I shall enjoy it exceedingly. But if I can't have the actual travel, I think the imaginary tours the next best thing."

"Undoubtedly. I should like to go to Africa; the fever comes with the name, I suppose."

"If we make one of our tours to Africa, we will put you on as one of the tourists," said Ruth, "looking over mission ground in the Congo valley, perhaps."

"I can't say that the missions would be very

attractive. Exploration and hunting would be my preference."

"Perhaps," said Ruth, "after a few months of starvation in an African jungle, you would learn Stanley's lesson."

"What was that?"

"Surely you have read it! How through hair-breadth escapes, the way out utterly hidden, famine and fever reducing their numbers, Stanley was led to see his utter dependence on Divine help. At the last extremity, with death staring them in the face, a cry to God brought the needed rescue."

"Yes, I have read something of it. But don't you think the help would have come anyhow?"

"Stanley does not think so. Another thing: he went to Africa indifferent, and even hostile, to missions; and he came out of Africa their warmest friend."

"That is news to me," said Gordon. "I always supposed Stanley to be a level-headed man, clear and practical in his ideas; and such are not your foreign mission men usually."

"Stanley is such a man as you describe, and his conversion to the cause is a strong argument in its favor. I am ashamed to say," continued she, smiling, "that I have only recently seen this thing in its true importance, and am

not well enough posted to give you much information. I have learned enough," said she, "to know that we, in the flood-light of civilization, owe something to those that are in absolute darkness. We all acknowledge that our advanced position among the nations is due to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. So is it not our plain duty to send this uplifting Gospel to them? Not only as a means of saving their souls, but also in order to elevate and civilize them."

"You should be a lawyer, Miss Ruth," said young Stanley, with a light laugh. "But haven't we wandered from our topic? We were to talk about foreign travel, and here we are discussing foreign missions."

Ruth laughed at this masculine effort at escape from dangerous ground.

"We were talking about African travel, Mr. Stanley, were we not?"

"Yes, and wandered off. I should like to visit the Congo Valley, with its wonderful river and its many attractions. I believe you can ascend the Congo in a steamer now," he added.

Ruth laughed outright. "Yes, in a missionary steamer put on the river to aid missionary work."

Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle, went the bell, and Gor-

don Stanley felt a sense of relief, mingled with an increased respect for his late companion, who had so nearly worsted him in argument.

Burmah was again a puzzling topic to many. But it was, at least, straightforward, with no hidden pitfalls of meaning to entrap the unwary. So encyclopedias had been consulted, maps studied, Asiatic geography reviewed, so that utter and blank ignorance might be avoided. The best posted were, of course, the six tourists who had so recently been to Burmah, and they were in great demand for partners.

"How far is it to Burmah, do you know?" asked Mary Tillinghast of Charlie Carey, whose companion she chanced to be at this time. "You ought to know, at all events," she added, laughing.

"About 17,000 miles by water, ma'am," returned he with a low bow. "We found it a lovely country, and only regretted that our stay must be so short."

"Tell me all you can, please," she said. "I have to go abroad next time, you know, and perhaps I can get some ideas."

"All I have are at your service," said Charlie gallantly. "Our field glass was the printed page, you must remember."

"Of course, but give me some idea of Burmah,

if you can. When I get rich I'm going to travel."

"First comes a lesson in Geography," said Charlie, a quizzical look on his face. "You remember the Bay of Bengal, of course? It juts up there into the southern coast of Asia, as if it meant to swallow the whole. At the head of the Bay is Bengal, Madras is on the west, and Burmah on the east."

"It all belongs to England now, doesn't it?"

"Yes, just within two or three years. It is more than fifty years since they took possession of the lower portion, in Judson's time."

"Judson? You haven't mentioned him before. He was a great missionary, I know. Was he in Burmah?"

"We wanted to tell about him the other night, but didn't have time. The story of his work there is wonderful. It would need an evening all by itself to do it justice."

"Was he persecuted?"

"I rather think you would call it persecution, if you had to suffer what he did. Driven from one place to another, in prison for months, suffering torture worse than death, he proved himself an out-and-out hero. I am afraid I should have given up laboring for such ungrateful wretches, and gone home to America."

"I would like to read about him," said Mary.

"Mrs. Seymour lent me his *Life*, and I tell you it is more exciting than any novel I ever read. I shall be through with it soon, and will beg the loan of it for you."

"Thank you very much. Did you go about a great deal when you were in *Burmah*?" asked Mary roguishly.

"Not as much as we wished; our time was too limited," answered Charlie gravely. "*Rangoon* was a good point in which to get an idea of the whole country."

"How do the people look?"

"They are rather short, with high cheek bones, dark eyes, coarse black hair, and light-brown or yellowish skin. They are a haughty race, quite despising the meek *Karens* who live among them, and whom I liked better than the *Burmans*."

"Who are the *Karens*? That is another new name."

"Really, Miss Mary, you are a catechist. The *Karens* are a shy, quiet people living in the mountains and jungles away from the *Burmans*, who oppress them. Dr. Judson found they did not worship idols, and were waiting for a new religion their traditions told them was to come. They are beautiful singers, and every word in

their language ends with a vowel. They accepted the Gospel far more willingly than the idolatrous Burmans."

"What god do the Burmese worship?"

"Dear me, what *don't* they worship! Their chief god is Gaudama, and beside there are numberless deities. I am not posted well enough to tell you more."

In a quiet corner, Katie Ingersoll is describing in an animated manner various scenes in Burmah. As we draw near we hear her saying,

"Oh, yes, we had a number of rides, and they all seemed so queer. Carriages, as we have them, are not known. You can go on the back of a pony, which is delightful. If you can't manage a pony, you can go in a clumsy cart without springs, drawn by a buffalo. These animals are wonderfully useful to the natives, but a foreigner must take care, for they have a great dislike to white people. You have to crawl in at the back of the cart, very quietly indeed, if you expect the buffalo to draw you. Otherwise there is danger of a fracas.

"Yes, there is one more mode of travel," she said in reply to a question from her companion, "and that is on the back of an elephant. I don't fancy that, however, for several reasons," she added, laughing.

"I think you must have been there, Miss Katie, in spirit, at least," said James Sewall admiringly.

"Oh, no, only on paper and in imagination," she laughed, as the bell tinkled. "You see, I had a peep through a telescope."

It was amusing to watch the different groups. The whole thing was utterly beyond the comprehension of souls like Susie Jefferson's, and she voted the evening stupid. Others were all enthusiasm, and these were, notably, the really active members of the Christian Endeavor Society. A large majority were a little mystified, yet feeling the enlightening influence of the new idea.

The concluding topic was Mrs. Ingalls. The six Burman tourists had, by agreement, gathered information about her life and the many thrilling incidents thereof within their reach. Each one tried to secure an uninformed partner, so as to scatter all the light possible.

Cecile thought her prospects for doing good rather dubious when she found her companion to be Henry Peterson. But he could appreciate a sensible partner, and she was surprised at his intelligent questions.

She began by telling him how Mr. and Mrs. Ingalls in their early married life went to Bur-

mah and how after his death she stayed to carry it on alone.

"Was it safe for a woman in that country?" he asked.

"She did not stop to ask if it was safe. That isn't her way. Through the years that followed she went about fearlessly, visiting districts where no white woman had ever been seen, talking to groups that crowded so closely about that she could scarcely breathe, and even for awhile making her home alone with the natives in one of her out-stations."

"Did nothing ever happen to her?"

"No. Dangers were often thick enough, especially at the time of the war when King Theebaw was dethroned; and dacoits, something like our guerillas, I suppose, were ravaging the country. At one time a price was set on her head, for she was a power felt and dreaded by the enemy; but she came out with flying colors. Once she located herself in a little shanty, a nest of snakes, scorpions, and smaller creatures, and superintended the building of a chapel."

"Well, I declare!" was all that Henry Peterson could say. This was a new type of womanhood to him, and one that thrilled him with a novel sensation.

Leaving Cecile to tell him more about this

indomitable missionary, this "jungle woman," as she calls herself, we will pass along to where Lucy Gray is talking to Stella Carr; for the boys did not quite equal the girls in number. Lucy found that she had a rather stubborn unbeliever in foreign missions on her hands; but she stood her ground bravely.

"Mrs. Ingalls is too clever a woman to sacrifice out there," Stella was saying. "Wouldn't she be a power among civilized folks?"

"She would be a power anywhere," Lucy replied, "but I doubt half as much anywhere else. Why, her word is law all through that region! and 'Mamma Ingalls' is a more powerful factor in the order and loyalty of that part of Burmah than all of the English officers."

"That may be, but does it pay to keep such a woman among the heathen?"

"If it pays to save souls, then Mrs. Ingalls's work pays in rich measure. Let me tell you about an object lesson she gave a man who came from a distance, and might never have another chance to hear the Gospel. He could speak a little Burman, but she could not speak his language at all. She wanted to give him a glimpse of the true religion. So she took a little idol and placed a paper of needles before it. Of course nothing happened. She then put a

magnet in the place of the idol, and the needles were drawn to it at once. The man could not credit his eyes. He picked up the magnet, and examined it to be sure there was no trick.

“‘English god!’ he exclaimed, and catching up needles and magnet and idol, he rushed into the next room, where a number of Burmans were sitting, and went through the same performance for their benefit. ‘No god,’ he says, spurning the idol. ‘Little god,’ he adds, pointing to the magnet.

“‘It has more power than our idols. Perhaps it is an English god,’ said one.

“‘No,’ said another, more enlightened, ‘the English God lives up in the heavens. Perhaps he made this strange iron.’

“Now they were ready to listen, as they never had been before, and Mrs. Ingalls talked with them till late in the night.”

“Were they converted?” asked Stella.

“I do not know,” said Lucy, “but surely their faith in idols must have been shaken.”

“Well, all this is very interesting, more so than I ever supposed it could be,” said Stella.

This admission of interest was a little advance on her previous hostility. Here we must leave her, for the present, at least.

CHAPTER VII.

CHAIN-LINKS.

IN every story there are links in the chain of events which must occasionally be carefully gathered up lest, perchance, some of them may be lost. I presume it has been a matter of wonderment to some of you that the four girls with whom our story opens were not hard at work in school, instead of resting content with the high school course. Hereby hangs a tale. You must not for a moment imagine that these wide-awake girls were not ambitious for the "Higher Education," as it is termed in these days. We must go back a little to fully understand the matter.

Dr. Ellis, Ruth's father, was the most popular physician in Woodland. He had that rare faculty of personal magnetism which is such an element of power when worthily combined with high purposes and noble aims. He was almost an ideal doctor. His patients became attached to him with that unquestioning devotion which gives such weight both to words of advice and expressed opinions. Now Dr. Ellis

was a man with a few cherished hobbies. To his credit be it said, there was always a show of reason for these pet theories, as he called them. One of these theories, that the cramming system in education was decidedly wrong, especially in the case of girls, was certainly sensible. He believed thoroughly in education, and any amount of it too. But he contended that a system which left the girls with aching backs, debility, and in a state of semi-invalidism was radically wrong. The true use of education was to fit them for life, and if it left them physical wrecks, it defeated its own ends.

It was entirely due to the strong personal influence of Dr. Ellis that, after their graduation from the high school, three out of the seven girls in the class, beside his own daughter, Ruth, decided to rest a year before entering upon another course of study. There was an excellent seminary in Woodland, and here they expected to enter at the beginning of the next school year. It was during this year of rest that they learned to give so much enthusiastic thought and effort to the cause of Christian Endeavor.

Ruth was the eldest daughter in the Ellis home. Her father watched her development with much satisfaction, mingled with a little

anxiety. She certainly was not resting, in the exact sense of the word. But she was proving her ability to meet responsibilities, and he was proud of her conscientious loyalty to duty. As a Christian himself, he rejoiced over her activity and usefulness, and felt that she was surely learning more valuable lessons than school would ever teach her.

The new departure did not at first appeal to Dr. Ellis very strongly. A busy physician sees enough of poverty, sorrow, and soul-needs in his daily rounds to make his very heart sick. He had brought many a case to the notice of the young workers. What wonder that he could not appreciate work so far away? The constant calls upon his time left him small opportunity for church attendance. Ruth was very anxious to have him hear the tour to Burmah, and made a special request that he would be present, if possible.

She was talking to him regarding it one evening shortly before it was to take place.

"I don't know, child," he said wearily, for it had been a hard day. "I don't have time to remember that I have a soul myself, and I am sure I see enough need every day I live to keep a dozen angels hard at work, if they hoped to relieve it."

“But it will rest you, papa dear, to hear of something different. The same things over and over make a wearisome rut after a while.”

“There is something in that,” he said, smiling at her. “Well, I’ll try and be there, a part of the time at least, if somebody doesn’t choose that very evening for being at the point of death.”

With this promise she had to be content, knowing it was the best he could make.

For a wonder, people were considerate, and by making calls up to the moment of opening the meeting, and one or two afterward, Dr. Ellis had the rare privilege of attending and staying through a missionary service. It was an experience quite out of the usual order of things, this peep at the other side of the globe. It was a rest, drawing his mind out of its usual groove, and for a little while he forgot that there were fevers, broken limbs, and tales of pain and suffering awaiting him again on the morrow.

Katie Ingersoll spent the night with Ruth, as we have seen, so he had no chance of expressing his mind to his daughter until the next day. Then he said, “Well, Ruthie, that is quite an idea for you young people, so different from what I supposed. I feel as if I really had an outing. What put such a thing into your heads?”

So the story had to be told over again to a very interested listener. It was strange, the mission that story had accomplished, and seemed destined yet to accomplish. When she paused in her narration, Dr. Ellis said, "Thank you for telling me, daughter. I think there is no doubt that God has set my work in home fields; but after this I shall not be content, as I have been, with a paltry five dollars a year for foreign missions. Go on with your mission of putting the telescopes to people's eyes and extending their vision."

This was precious evidence to Ruth that the Master was owning their effort for him.

An odd thing was happening to Charlie Carey during these days. One morning, soon after his renewed consecration to the service of Christ, he came in his daily reading to the words, "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision." The words caught and held his attention. What did they mean? He tried to finish the chapter, but those words stood out on the page, blotting out all else. He closed the book and went about his daily work. They seemed photographed on his brain. They rung in his ears and would give him no rest. Could it be a message from God? It was a new thing for Charlie Carey to look for daily guidance.

from on high, but he had learned the sweetness of that lesson.

“Valley of decision”! What sort of a valley could that be? It was not the one in which he had allowed himself to dwell so long, for that was certainly a valley of indecision. Was that a place for a Christian to be? What was that his mother had said to him just a month before? The words came back fresh to his memory:

“My son, if you ever hope to make anything in life, anything worthy and noble, it is high time you were deciding on your course of action.”

His answer then had not reassured her, for she had turned away with a sad, disappointed face.

How old was he? Twenty his next birthday, and little preparation made for work worthy the abilities God had given him. Indeed it was time he should enter into the “valley of decision.”

The lesson of his morning reading had gone home to his heart. It was not exactly a comfortable experience that it brought, for it caused him the hardest thinking of his whole life.

What was the result? An interview with his mother that evening gave her the key-note of

the day's deliberation with himself. The joy it brought her was too deep for smiles; it was more nearly akin to happy tears.

He told her the whole story—of his recent resolves to do better, with the Lord's help, of the lesson that had come in the morning's reading, and the decision at which he had arrived.

"Mother, dear," he said, "I think a physician has great opportunities for doing good, and I believe my tastes fit me for that profession. I should want to be such a one as Dr. Ellis, if I could. Does this life-plan suit you?"

He had thrown himself on a low hassock at her feet. She looked down on her handsome boy, with a tender light in his uplifted eyes and the illumination of noble purposes on his face. She stooped and kissed him.

"If you think that you can enter heartily into medicine as your chosen profession, I wish you a loving God-speed, my son. Anything honorable is better than this frittering away of these precious years of your early manhood. But if you are to be a physician, Charlie, I want you to have the most thorough preparation; for you will need to take a well-disciplined, cultured mind into the work. Nothing but the topmost notch will satisfy my ambition for you."

“And that will take six or eight years, mother. Oh, how I wish I had not wasted this year!”

“So do I. But for your comfort remember that you will be at a mature age when you begin to practise. I want you to tell your father what you have told me, and perhaps you can yet begin study this year.”

Mr. Carey was a lawyer and not a Christian. He believed in religion most thoroughly, but not as a personal matter. He rejoiced at the evident change in Charlie, who had been a source of considerable anxiety. It was a great relief to him also, when his only son arrived at the “valley of decision,” although he never knew the whole story. So it was arranged that Charlie should take a preparatory course in medical reading with Dr. Ellis, for the remainder of the school year, and enter college the next fall.

It was strange what new life and manliness were apparent in his very bearing. Not strange, either, when you think of it, for now he had a purpose before him, a goal to be obtained. What further use God has for this young man will appear in the sequel.

There are two characters who should, before this, have been introduced into our story. But

certain events have developed so rapidly that there has really been no room for them before. Paul Fletcher was well known and loved in Woodland. He had originally a strong, kindly nature, which would have made him a fellow with his fellows. But the hand of God touched him, and set him apart as one afflicted.

He had reached the age of sixteen, living the life that other boys live, and sharing in their sports and pleasures, when, without warning, he was prostrated with spinal fever. Dr. Ellis, then quite a young physician, cared for him unremittingly, night and day, fighting a hand to hand conflict with Death. Slowly, from the very border land of the other world, Paul came back. He used to say that his mother's love drew him, and would not let him die.

But I think it was because God had a special work for him to do for His glory, afflicted and shut off from his kind as he was. For it became evident, as strength returned, that Paul was utterly and hopelessly deaf. The cruel fever had destroyed the nerve of hearing. Of course this seemed hard, but Paul met the trouble with a brave heart, and went on with his studies as best he could. Speech became difficult, and the outlook was not a cheerful one for the lad. But through the advice of Dr. Ellis,

who felt a tender, fatherly interest in the boy, his mother's only son and she a widow, he was sent to an institution for the deaf and dumb. He took the entire course, and felt that he was almost one with the world again, so many avenues of communication were opened to him.

But a worse trouble was to come—another result of the terrible fever—creeping paralysis made itself apparent. Slowly and gradually had it been at work, until at the time of our story he could only go from place to place in a wheeled chair; his arms and head, with its noble face, alone remaining untouched. For now Paul was thirty years old. A more cheerful, sunny soul was not to be found in all Woodland. Denied expression in usual channels, his thought flowed forth in verse. Their delicate humor was often entrancing, while at times the rugged strength of his measures told of a heart that had fought and conquered.

God had raised up for Paul one choice friend. Miss Patterson, a teacher in the seminary, took it upon herself to unlock for Paul some of the pleasures denied him. In one corner of the church was a recess, given up to Paul's chair and a seat for his friend. Using the sign language, she interpreted the Sabbath sermons. Both were active members of the Young Peo-

ple's Society of Christian Endeavor, although Paul used to say with a smile that his activity could not count for much. But his cheerful, sunny acceptance of his daily cross was a continual lesson to them all. Katie Ingersoll often said that Paul was a means of grace. Certain it was that they loved him tenderly. Set apart by his affliction, he won to himself rare compensations in the way of sympathy.

Miss Patterson told the others that God had marked out her work for her. Through her swiftly moving fingers Paul enjoyed the prayer-meetings, and from his written slips she conveyed his message to them all. Was this small work, think you?

Through this same medium Paul went to Burmah with the six tourists, and enjoyed an evening of rare pleasure. It was not quite as unfamiliar ground to him as to the others, for he had been reading Judson's life, lent him previously by Mrs. Seymour. But it took him a step farther on, and he felt a peculiar sympathy with the new movement. Thoughts regarding it followed him even in his dreams, and he resolved to read all the missionary literature within his reach. It was strange what advanced ground Paul, with all his disabilities, had reached.

Thoughtfulness is sometimes contagious. Whether this was the case at this present time or not, it was certain something had come over Henry Peterson. There was less of the foppish air of self-consciousness that had been so offensive to sensible people. The fact was, that the young man had been doing some real thinking since the topic party. As we have seen, Susie Jefferson was his first partner on that occasion, and her silly shallowness appeared in such striking contrast with some of his later partners that his eyes were fully opened. The glimpse of an earnest, consecrated woman that the talk about Mrs. Ingalls gave him made his own way of living seem pitifully small and mean. Henry Peterson had not reached the point where he could see clearly that it was Christ in the life that made the difference. But a longing for better things was stirring in his heart, and we can trust the Master to guide this inquiring soul into the way of peace, even though it does not yet even ask to be led. In his own good time that point will be reached.

We must pause long enough for a glimpse of Katie Ingersoll, alone in her own room, the Wednesday night after Charlie had passed through the "valley of decision." On the way home from prayer-meeting he had confided to

her his new hopes and plans and purposes. It was a very happy heart that Katie carried to the quiet and solitude of her room. She said over and over again to herself, "He thinks I am the cause of it all! How glad and thankful a girl I ought to be! but then, if he only knew it, that blessed plan began it all! That was of the Lord, I am sure. He led me to the reading, and helped all the way through. And to think what it has done for Charlie, to say nothing of the rest of us! Well, with all his gifts, he will make a man to be proud of! He is just cut out for a doctor, I think, and I hope he will be as grand a man as dear Dr. Ellis. How glad his mother must be! And there is Cecile. She always wanted to be proud of her brother, and now she will have a chance, I hope."

CHAPTER VIII.

OPENING DOORS.

THE days and the weeks hurried on, as days and weeks will do, no matter what our wishes may be. Christmas, with all its delight and happy work, was once more a thing of the past.

New-Year's day came to open a new record book, the old one having been shut and sealed for the judgment. The preparation for the trip abroad had been much interrupted, but there were two weeks of January available for study before the meeting.

This second tour took the audience to China, that mysterious land so long barred from the vision of the outside world. The peeps within its gates, as given by the six tourists, were a revelation to many of wonders hitherto undreamed, of needs before unimagined. The evening's program was closed by the pastor with the solemn words,

“Remember,
‘A million a month in China
Are dying without God.’”

After the second tour, the missionary side of

the Christian Endeavor work in Woodland Park Church had its definite and established place. Croakers there were, of course, for when are they ever wanting when real progressive work is on hand? The cause for thankfulness was, that they were in the minority. Whenever a church or a band of Christian workers finds itself without the grumblers or the shirkers, one of two things is certain: either the millennium is at hand, or there isn't enough real aggressive piety to stir the devil into activity.

We must not linger too long over this happy, busy winter, only I must tell you of one of the outgrowths of the new departure.

The week after the glimpse at China, Ruth Ellis had a surprise. She had been too busy for the past few months to enter, as she usually did, into the family life. She had a brother, Fred, thirteen years old, a bright, irrepressible boy, ambitious in school directions, and never absolutely still, except when asleep. Ruth was both fond and proud of her only brother, and she had a wonderful influence over him.

Her sister Bertha was so different! Quiet, reserved, indisposed to much effort, she was too often willing that the world should slide on as it would, if only her ease and comfort were

considered. Rather a selfish tendency for a girl of eleven! It worried Mrs. Ellis and Ruth a good deal; but Dr. Ellis insisted that she would outgrow it under the proper influences.

Ruth was restlessly waiting in the parlor one evening for Charlie Carey, who was to call for her to go to a committee meeting. Fred was in the library just adjoining, apparently very busy with his lessons for the next day. But his thoughts must have also been busy in other directions, for presently he called, "I say, Ruthie!"

"What is it, Fred?" she said, going to his side.

"I think it's just too bad. You used to be always ready to help a fellow, but now you are always busy about some old committee or other. There are folks on this side of the world yet."

Ruth was almost too surprised to speak.

"Why, Fred," she said after a minute, "what do you mean?"

"I mean this. Ever since you went off travelling that time—to Burmah, wasn't it? you've lived over there, I guess, for you haven't been one bit the same."

Ruth stood silent, thinking. Was it true that the telescopes shut off the near view? It certainly ought not so to be. There should be

an equality of vision, each object, close at hand or afar off, seen in its due proportion.

Fred thought she must be hurt by his bluntness, and said,

“Never mind, sis, I know you have lots to see to, being president and all that. Only it came over me that we wanted a few of the crumbs of knowledge you were picking up. I’d like to know something about those jolly way-off things too.”

So here was a hungry soul right within the four walls of her own home! She hardly knew whether to cry over her careless blindness, or to thank the Lord that the desire for light was spreading even to the children. Fred went on to say,

“I liked to hear those stories you folks told about Burmah, the golden palace, the queens and the queer things over there. And that last time was pleasant too. My! wouldn’t I like to have visited that school in China! I’d need to have my ears insured first, I suppose. Do the missionaries have such schools as that?”

“Of course not, Fred, that was a heathen school,” she answered, half unconsciously, for her mind was following its own train of thought. What could she do to take advantage of this thirst for knowledge? For such impulses must

be caught on the wing, else the opportunity they give will be gone forever.

She put her arm caressingly around her brother. "Ruthie did not mean to neglect you, dear, and we must see about matters. Good-night, I hear Charlie coming."

A light kiss dropped on his forehead preceded her going, and the boy felt in a half-unconscious fashion the sweet savor it left behind it. As for his sister, he had given her food for exceedingly grave thought. Charlie wondered at her unusual silence.

It so happened that the committee meeting in question was at Mr. Carey's, and the members thereof were our four girls. A very sweet and sisterly love drew them close together, and it often occurred that they worked in company. The business on hand for this evening was not pertaining to foreign missions, but when it was at last disposed of, Ruth told her story and laid her perplexity before the other three girls.

Katie's quick wit saw the drift of things instantly. "Why, Ruthie," she said, "this is more work to take up, don't you see! It is the direct outgrowth of our plan. God is in it."

"But how shall we go to work?" said poor Ruth, in a bewildered fashion. "How can we add to what we have on our hands now?"

Lucy Gray laughed and said,

"Don't you see you have adopted just the argument that Stella Carr and others who opposed our new departure used against it? They said, you know, that we had so much to do at home that we couldn't possibly take up anything more. I know we are all busy, but if the Lord calls, it is best to obey."

By this time Cecile had arrived at her conclusion in the matter.

"I think, girls," said she, in her quiet way that carried conviction with it, "that this is wonderfully encouraging. We shall be training up our future helpers, and they won't be as ignorant as we were to begin with. The more we know, the more interested we are."

"That is to say, they will learn to have telescopic vision earlier in life," laughed Katie. "But aren't the girls to be included as well as the boys? That reminds me that I heard my small sister Edie, who is only eight years old, you know, confiding to Aunt Martha that just as soon as she was big enough, she was going to be a 'Christian endeavor,' and go travelling, too."

"Bless her heart!" ejaculated Lucy fervently. "We will help her to be a little 'endeavor' if she has longings in that praiseworthy direc-

tion. Let us undertake the matter, girls, not only for Edie and Fred, but for all we can induce to join."

"In what way, Lucy?" asked Ruth. "Shall we form them into mission bands?"

"Something of that sort, I suppose, but after a fashion that shall be lively and interesting. None of the old ruts, please, for us to make shipwreck over."

It was Ruth's turn to laugh. "Really, Lucy, what would Miss Snowden say to your mixing of metaphors? I didn't know before that it was customary to sail ships in a rut."

"Oh, well, never mind, Ruth. We might possibly get stuck in a rut, I suppose," she said, smilingly.

"Yes, indeed. I speak from experience," answered Ruth. "But I think we need some head that is wiser than ours to advise us in this thing. I propose that we consult dear Mrs. Seymour."

"And I second the motion," said lively little Katie. "Suppose we go and see her to-morrow."

The result of the conference with the pastor's wife was most satisfactory. The four girls grew enthusiastic over the new endeavor before them. Mrs. Seymour had been ready with a number of suggestions, all practical, and delightfully new.

"Girls," she had said, "I have a large quantity of material collected for a mission-band scrap-book: stories, information regarding the various countries, letters from missionaries, etc. I have not yet found the time in which to arrange it for use. Besides this, I have a good-sized collection of pictures of scenes in foreign lands, many of them directly missionary pictures. For a long time it has been in my mind to prepare from these a series of views, by mounting the pictures on cardboard to use in the study of the different countries. If some of your endeavorers," she said, smiling, "will help me arrange all this material, it shall be at your service in aiding to entertain and instruct the little people."

"That is better than anything we had dreamed of, dear Mrs. Seymour," said Ruth fervently. "If you will tell us where, how, and when to help you in arranging all this delightful material, we will come in force."

So an afternoon was appointed. An invitation was given at the next Sunday afternoon meeting, for the young ladies of the Christian Endeavor Society to meet at the parsonage on Tuesday, at two o'clock, and to bring each a big apron and a pair of scissors.

This novel announcement brought out a large

number. Mrs. Seymour took her young helpers to the dining-room, where they found the long extension-table stretched to its utmost length to afford a basis for operations. Our four girls had been busy all the morning, under the hostess's direction, sorting out the clippings for the scrap-book into the several departments to which they belonged, and also gathering out from a formidable pile of miscellaneous pictures those suited to the purpose under consideration.

Quite a little company was gathered that Tuesday afternoon. Besides the "quartette," as they were usually called, were our old friends Dorothy Dutton and Mary Tillinghast. Stella Carr came, and half a dozen who have not appeared by name in our story. Even Susie Jefferson was on hand, in her usual endeavor to find something she could designate as "fun."

Paul Fletcher, in his wheeled chair, was at one end of the table. He was wonderfully deft in the use of his hands, and nothing suited him better than work of this sort. Then, too, he was a great favorite with all the girls, any of whom could talk rapidly and fluently with him in the sign-language, learned for his sake. Mrs. Seymour, knowing that it would be an occasion that would give him pleasure, had sent him a special invitation. He was a particular protégé

of hers, and much sunshine had come into his lonely life since her advent in Woodland.

While we are telling all this, our party has gone busily to work. Mrs. Seymour and Ruth had the direction of affairs, and soon each individual had a portion assigned. Part of the scrap-book club, as Katie designated her division of workers, trimmed the clippings and passed them on to the pasters, who applied the paste, while Lucy put them in place neatly in the book. At the other end of the table was the art gallery, as it was called in distinction from the scrap-book department. Here the cardboard, cut in pieces of uniform size, lay in piles, all ready for the pictures and any bits of description that might accompany them. The cuts were to be trimmed in a particular way, and mounted on the cardboard in uniform style. Paul, Cecile, and Mary Tillinghast were selected to do the mounting, as it required special care and pains.

What a bee-hive it was ! I think it was perhaps as telling a foreign mission lesson as some of those present had ever received. The pictures were in themselves telescopes, giving glimpses of lands far away, and of the people that inhabit them. And then the amount of information that went into that huge scrap-book !

Somebody, I think it was Katie, for it sounds just like her, wondered how many pounds avoirdupois it would all weigh.

The girls had a merry time, for Mrs. Seymour was too wise to allow them to become silent and constrained. Paul was as happy as any of them, for he was made to feel included in all the laughter and good feeling. Even Susie enjoyed herself, and yet, as she thought it all over, she hardly knew why. But the afternoon was only another illustration of Mrs. Seymour's rare power to bring out the best in all with whom she came in contact. Each girl felt a stimulus toward right and noble thinking and living, that did not leave the moment the parsonage door shut behind her.

The little company accomplished wonders that afternoon. All the pictures were beautifully mounted, and the scrap-book more than half done. The "quartette" begged the privilege of finishing it, and so, when they departed, took the materials away with them.

It was not many days before they reported it as finished. Paul Fletcher had proved a valuable helper, and had worked many hours when the girls were busy with other duties.

Now that everything was ready, the next question was regarding the best way to organize the

little people. The news of the proposed band had spread abroad in juvenile circles. It was very fine, the children thought, to have something like those wonderful journeys to far-off lands that had been so much talked about. Fred Ellis and Edie Ingersoll, in particular, had been very busy drumming up recruits for the organization. Everything promised well in these first days of enthusiasm.

For an opening meeting, the little folks that were interested were invited to the prayer room one Saturday afternoon in March. It was a cold, blustering day, yet a goodly number were present; so many, in fact, that the four girls felt almost frightened at the thought of keeping so large a company of restless juveniles interested and in order. The matter was finally arranged by organizing two bands, one for the boys, under the leadership of Katie Ingersoll and Lucy Gray, the girls to form another, presided over by Ruth Ellis and Cecile Carey. The boys were to meet on the first Saturday in the month, and the girls would take the second. You see the young leaders must use the same material, and so both could not meet on the same day. It was arranged, however, that once in three months the two bands should have a joint meeting, with some special exercises.

Would you like to have some idea of their first program? This had been a subject of anxious thought and discussion among the four young girls who so keenly felt the responsibilities laid upon them. Will it astonish you to be told that they had a prayer-meeting over the matter? Knowing the girls as you do by this time, you will be ready, I am sure, to realize how thoroughly they relied on divine help and leading. Under these conditions, including their real zeal and earnestness, what could remain for them but blessed success?

They decided upon Burmah as the first country to be studied. Studied, I say, for the main object was not merely the amusement and entertainment of the children, but that they might be wisely instructed as well.

"We don't want them to grow up as near-sighted sinners as we were," said Katie, in her characteristic fashion. "I vote for Burmah, because they have heard a little about it, and have a beginning of interest in that particular country. Then we ourselves are better fitted to help them in that direction, because of our own study and research."

So Burmah was agreed upon, and the first Saturday afternoon in April found an eager, wide-awake company of boys in the Ingersoll

library. Katie and Lucy thought it would be pleasanter than in the large prayer-room, with the empty spaces echoing all about them.

Everything available had been laid under tribute for this first meeting. Besides the big scrap-book, with its wealth of material, and the mounted views of Burmah, there were books with illustrations, missionary papers, sketches and stories, and most rare of all, a fragment of a Burman tract, which had been borrowed from Mr. Seymour's collection of curios.

Lucy undertook the opening exercises. I presume you feel sympathy for her, as I do; for what harder individual is there to pray before than the average boy, especially when he is multiplied by a dozen or two? He is so quick to feel the "inwardness of things," as Aunt Maria Brown would express it. Hypocrisy and shams have small show before his clear-sightedness.

Yet, for Lucy's comfort be it said, he is just as quick to recognize real truth and earnestness. She impressed them all the more that her voice trembled a little, and the brief supplication was direct and to the point.

It had not been thought best to require anything of the boys this time, only to listen. Mr. Seymour had a large missionary map, and on

this Katie first gave them a map-lesson regarding the country in question.

No one exercise or reading was long enough to tire them, so their interest was held all the way through. The pictures illustrated and made plain the information given, and the stories were only pictures in another form.

The end of the hour came before they knew it. Some simple lessons had been prepared, and were given out at this time. Boys like heroes, and so they made a beginning of what was called "Hero Studies," the first one on the list being that of Judson, the "Apostle of Burmah." For they had by no means exhausted this first country.

"We are not going to be in a hurry, boys," said Katie to them as the next month's work was announced. "We want you to become so familiar with each land that we study, that you will almost feel you have been there. When you hear the wonderful missionary heroes talked about, you should feel that they are old acquaintances; that you have seen where they lived, and the people where they labored."

Perhaps the two girls would have felt encouraged could they have heard the various comments of the boys as they went out.

"I tell you," said one boy, Harry Price by

name, "I think it is going to be real interesting. I don't much believe in giving up Saturday, but this will be as good as play, I guess."

"It isn't going to be all play, though," said Fred Ellis. "For my part, I am glad it isn't. We shall know something when we get through."

The other leaders had a pleasanter day when the next Saturday came. Ruth had invited the band to meet with her, and the parlors were well filled. Much the same program was gone through with as at the boys' meeting, save that it was proposed to lay more stress upon missionary heroines than heroes. So the lives of the three Mrs. Judsons, with their wonderful story of noble endurance of suffering, the self-sacrifice which makes easy living seem so trifling and worthless, were assigned as part of the next lesson.

Even Bertha Ellis was aroused to a sort of languid interest. The most were very enthusiastic, and the young workers felt hopeful for the future of this new undertaking.

CHAPTER IX.

TURNING A PENNY.

It had been quite a question in the minds of the originators of the mission band idea how the children should earn the money for the cause. If their parents should give it to them, it would not be their gift. Many schemes were discussed, and finally the following was chosen as a beginning:

Each member of the band was to bring a penny to every regular meeting. That should be called the membership due. In addition to this, a cent was to be given to every one of them to invest and increase as much as possible. Dr. Ellis was the author of this suggestion, and also helped it along by furnishing the thirty-five pennies for the fifteen boys and the twenty girls.

"What can a fellow do with just a penny!" Fred Ellis said, rather contemptuously, when he heard the subject first talked of at home. "Five cents would be something of a show, now, but I can't see what I can do with a single copper."

"Perhaps it will teach you not to despise even little things, my boy," said his father. "I assure you there are capabilities in a cent that will surprise you."

So the pennies were given out to a very perplexed set of children. The leaders refrained from giving suggestions, wishing them to solve the problem for themselves. One thing was very soon evident—the rivalry between the boys and girls would be sharp and spicy. Wits were set to work, and the pennies were made to reveal all their innate possibilities.

It would take chapters to describe all the methods employed to turn the penny. The favorite way was to buy tissue paper, and from a single sheet evolve something that would yield a nickel for further investment. Two little fellows, brothers, put their pennies together and bought pop-corn, which when popped brought the boys a bright silver dime. Finding the partnership profitable, they continued it and the pop-corn trade, which grew into quite a business, so that in the two months given for the trial they made a dollar apiece for the band.

One boy had a penny bearing quite an old date. He sold it for five cents to another boy who was making a collection, and so increased his stock in trade.

The girls proved themselves fertile in resources. One enterprising maiden borrowed four cents of her big brother, which she put with her penny, and bought a spool of thread. Being expert in the use of the crochet needle, she soon had it wrought into lace, which sold for thirty cents. After returning the borrowed four cents, she had twenty-six cents for more extended operations. Another little girl bought sugar of her mother, paying her cent down, the remainder to be paid when returns came in. Her candy-making was so successful that she tried no other line of trade, and realized handsome returns. Still others, after having by various devices increased their small capital to a larger amount, bought cheese-cloth, and made it into pretty and useful things. Sweeping-caps cut out of bright cambric, aprons both practical and ornamental, dust-cloths for busy house-keepers, were among the things evolved by these deft fingers.

The boys were not behind their fair competitors. They felt that they must make up in effort the disparity in numbers.

Had the time been longer, the report of the returns from this novel undertaking would have been quite flattering. But considering everything, the children did remarkably well. The

net proceeds of all their varied undertakings was fifteen dollars; of which seven dollars and a half were raised by the boys.

As spring opened, and all sorts of gardening operations became in order, another plan was ready for the young workers. At the April meeting the boys were surprised to see good Deacon Brown come in to the exercises. They all loved him, so his presence did not disturb them in the least. Just before the close he asked to say a few words.

"Boys," he said, "if I had been blessed with such a chance to learn about God's work in the world, when I was young, like you, I should not be so ignorant an old man about them now. I am glad to see you are learning to use missionary eye-glasses. These lessons are your helps to see to the other side of the world.

"I have been hearing something about your efforts to earn money for this good cause. I want to have a share in it too. So I will make this offer: I will give every boy three 'Beauty of Hebron' potatoes, if he will plant them and take good care of them till the crop is ripened. The potatoes you raise shall be yours to sell for your hand work. I would like to know, next fall, the amount each boy succeeds in raising."

The boys could not be restrained from giving

a subdued cheer. They enjoyed these tests of their money-making abilities, and it helped to keep up their enthusiasm in the new plan.

But what about the girls? The quartette put their heads together, and decided that they must have a chance as well as the boys. So at the next meeting the girls were asked if they would like to raise flowering plants, and put the results of their summer's labor into a plant-sale in the fall. The idea was received with great favor. A number of the ladies in the church offered to supply slips and seeds for the young workers.

I should be sorry to give the idea that the entire interest of the two bands was centred in money-making, even for the good cause. All through the summer the missionary studies went on with unabated diligence. They were so arranged as not to tax the children unduly, and the happy out-door work was good for both bodies and souls. True, the sun did often seem very hot when those potatoes needed care, but in most cases the young gardeners did their duty faithfully, and the harvest showed good results.

The opening of the schools in September made some changes in the management of band-work necessary. The children themselves would

have less time to devote to the matter, and the quartette, as we have seen, were also to enter the seminary. Mrs. Seymour came to their help by offering to prepare the lessons and arrange programs for meetings, thus saving much of the time of our school-girls.

It was determined, however, to make a grand festival occasion for the bands, gathering together the results of the summer's labor and offering it for sale. It must be on a Saturday, of course, and the third one in October was chosen. The prayer-room of the church was beautifully decorated; the plants, each with its price affixed, were arranged tastefully on stands, while the boys had their harvest attractively displayed beneath evergreen booths.

It was surprising to see how well the children had done. Many of the plants were really fine, and the show of chrysanthemums was especially beautiful. There was also a table for the sale of cut flowers, and the girls with this in charge felt a just pride in its attractiveness.

But those potatoes! No wonder the boys saw more beauty in the yellow-brown tubers than in all the display on the other side of the room. It represented so much to them! Many hours of hard work, many a back-ache, many

memories of perspiring brows and blistered hands, had crystallized into this tangible form.

It was evident that Mr. Seymour had once been a boy himself, as he made the very felicitous opening address. I should hardly call it an address, for it was not a bit stiff, the children thought. It was just a talk, that went to the very heart of things.

Quite a large number were present, for the children had advertised the matter widely among their friends. Foreign missions was not an unfamiliar, unheard-of subject these days. Whatever takes thorough hold of the juvenile interest is sure to compel attention. Mr. Seymour told the story of the earnest efforts, the fruit of which was before them. He spoke of the hopes, the desires, that had been the animating principle all these months, and appealed to the older people to show their appreciation of the children's toil and endeavor.

The appeal was not in vain. The pretty plants, potted all ready for a place in greenhouse or window-garden, found plenty of purchasers. The price had been plainly marked upon each, and no fancy figures allowed, for it had been decided, for the sake of the effect upon the children, that the money must all be legitimately earned.

Good old Deacon Brown hovered near the potato corner with a beaming face. Each boy's harvest was by itself, and he smiled approvingly over each pile, so precious to its owner's heart. They made a goodly showing, and the dear man was as proud of the boys' success as if it had been his own. The potatoes were held at the strict market price, and found ready sale.

When all was over, and they counted their proceeds, it was found that the girls' share in the fund of thirty dollars was fourteen dollars, leaving the boys sixteen. Oh, what a shout went up from the jubilant youths! The boys' band had grown from the original fifteen to eighteen, so that the two bands were more nearly equal.

Eddie Ingersoll was not disposed to allow them to do all the crowing. It will be seen that she had some of her sister Katie's spiciness of speech.

"Now look here, boys," she said, "you know that if there hadn't been such a dreadful drought down South, so that their potato crop was a failure, the price wouldn't have been so high, and you wouldn't have made as much. You didn't work a bit harder than we did, and I am sure you are not so very far ahead, after all."

The boys had gallant hearts, if they did love to triumph a little bit; and perhaps, too, the thought of the cause for which they had been working, and the One to whom the cause belonged, influenced them to graceful and generous action. At all events, Fred Ellis spoke up in his impulsive fashion,

“Edie’s right, boys. Let us go halves, for they deserve it.”

Most of them agreed heartily, and so each band had placed to its credit in the bank the amount of fifteen dollars, in addition to previous earnings.

This brought up another question for decision. What should be done with the money? All sorts of things were proposed, for there are always plenty of ways in which money is needed for the Lord’s work. Finally the girls decided to support a girl in Mrs. Ingalls’ school at Thongzai, Burmah, while the boys wanted theirs to go to the aid of a boy in China. The children were all very sure they should want to keep on earning money, and this would be a definite object before them.

Please do not think that while all these months have been passing, the new departure of the Christian Endeavor Society of Woodland Park Church had been forgotten. Every two

months there had been a missionary tour to some part of the world-field. New tourists had been found for each occasion, which goes to show that the interest was widening. The prayer-meetings of the society had taken on fresh life, and Ruth no longer complained that Christian work was running in deep-worn ruts.

She was not the present president, however. New elections had brought other officers to take the place of those who held controlling positions at the beginning of our story. Stephen Hollister was now president, and was grandly proving his capability for the office. They all missed Charlie Carey, who, in September, had entered college in an Eastern city. His mother read between the lines of his weekly letters home of a noble purpose to make the most of himself for God and mankind. Katie's private desk held also certain missives, which were read and re-read till the contents were engraved upon her heart. Perhaps Charlie told his young friend more of his aspirations than to the home circle.

One thing was evident : Charlie was taking a bold stand as one of the Lord's avowed followers. He wrote of the strong, grand Young Men's Christian Association, with its banded workers. He was heart and soul in sympathy

with its aims. No wonder the loving friends in Woodland felt safe about this young man. Temptations to sin have little power to those busied in such service.

Nor was study neglected. He wrote to his mother his intention to make up a year in the course, and so reach his chosen work a year earlier. He said,

“If the Lord will only let me do this, I shall feel that he has forgiven me for my wasted time. But can I ever forgive myself?”

Mrs. Carey took this letter to Dr. Ellis. She, mother-like, feared over-taxation. But Dr. Ellis was wise in many directions. He said to her that Charlie was in perfect health, with no weakness from dissipation or kindred vices.

“In fact,” he said, smiling, “Charlie has always taken such excellent care of himself that a little hard work won’t hurt him now. I think you can trust him, my dear Mrs. Carey, most thoroughly, both with the Lord and with his own self.”

She went away comforted. But that night, this busy man, this physician, whose chance for even necessary food and sleep was limited by the demands upon his skill, sat down and wrote a long letter of fatherly advice and counsel to this young man. The result was, that

Charlie Carey made the care of his body a religious duty, the same as of his brain and his soul. We shall have occasion to speak of him again later on in our story.

After the year of rest from systematic study, our four girls found school duties somewhat confining. They had been so absorbed in their beloved Endeavor work that it was hard to make it take second place.

"It isn't really second place, girls," said Katie, one afternoon on the way home from school. "Isn't this fitting ourselves for our life work as truly an 'endeavor' as the rest? That is the way it looks to me, at least."

"I know it," said Ruth, to whom Katie's remark had been a reply, "but I am sure it is sometimes hard to know just where duty lies. Father is very particular, you know, in regard to late hours; and lessons must be learned. I begin to think that I shall have to limit my Endeavor work greatly."

Just then Stephen Hollister joined the group. He has greatly improved since our first acquaintance with him, and he gives the impression of a very wide-awake and earnest young man.

It so happens that Ruth and Katie form one couple, leaving Cecile and Stephen to form the

other. The conversation is general, for a time at least.

"Our last missionary journey was interesting, wasn't it?" said Stephen. "I am glad to see all these new ones take hold of the telescope idea so grandly. Corea is a country I had very little knowledge of, and it proved as well worth visiting as any of the others. Miss Ruth, we missed you at our last topic party."

"You must remember that my time is not at my own disposal this year, Mr. Hollister. We are school-girls now, you know."

"Yes, I do know; but as this was on a Friday evening, I hoped your lessons might not prove an obstacle."

"It isn't all the lessons," she said, bravely, "but there are so many demands on our time and strength, I felt that I must draw the line somewhere. I could not live without the prayer-meetings," she added, smiling, "and I thought I might exist without the topic-party, much as I always enjoy them."

"I presume you are right," he answered, "but you four girls are missed sadly when absent. We had some very important topics under discussion, and I confess I wanted your help in making some of our young men see the true side of things."

"Father says that duty does not lie in two directions," said Ruth again, "and it is his wishes, rather than my own, that decide in many cases. He claims," said she, laughing, "that I am not nearly as important a factor in the world's work as I shall be with an education; and if I use up all my physical energy while I am preparing for these wonderful things I expect to be and do, I shall not be worth much after all. In pursuance of this idea, I retire early, and keep myself as fresh as possible."

"Dr. Ellis is certainly sensible," he said gravely, "and it can safely be left with your very healthy conscience to decide what you should do."

"I have to follow close in Ruthie's footsteps, of course," laughed Katie, "for whatever Dr. Ellis thinks is law at our house. But you need not expect that I am going to exile myself altogether from our beloved Endeavorers. They are too much a part of myself."

"I think the Lord asks us for part of the time," said Cecile's quiet voice. "Sunday, of course, is his, with all of us; also Wednesday evening. But the purely literary work we can afford to spare while we are in school."

"You always arrive at just the right point,

Cecile dear," said Katie, "after the rest of us have floundered about in search of it. But I cannot agree to give up our missionary and band work altogether."

"Papa has consented to the one Saturday afternoon a month for our beloved juveniles," said Ruth. "And when the tours abroad are on hand, I shall be there to use the missionary telescope."

Just here the ways parted. Ruth turned west to Floral Avenue, Katie eastward to Park Street, with Lucy as her companion for a single block; while Stephen lingered by Cecile's side as she kept straight north toward her home, three blocks distant.

Stephen was no longer the stammering, bewildered boy in the presence of this beautiful, self-contained girl that he used to be. He was conscious of growing up toward her height, which still seemed above him, although not as unattainable a distance as formerly. We have seen something of his determination and perseverance, never stopping short of a goal when once in view. The sweetest hope of his life, next to his trust in God, was to win Cecile Carey for his own. The way seemed long, for first he must make himself worthy and fit by education and culture for such a mate. He had

found a friend in Judge Kennedy, of Woodland, who had been strongly impressed by the young man's force and pluck, as he called it. Through his influence, Stephen had decided upon the law as his future profession.

While we have been giving you this glimpse of Stephen's hopes and present aims, the two friends have parted at Cecile's gate; and while she has gone in to the dear home circle with its greetings and its joys, he has gone on his solitary way, dreaming of a day when the word home shall be his in its fulness and sweetness; and the presiding angel shall be the slender, graceful girl to whom he has just bidden "good-night" at her father's gate.

While Stephen is wrapped in this pleasant dream, let me tell you a little more of his plans and his prospects. He still retains his position in the bank, but evenings and spare moments are given to the study of ponderous law-books, under the direction of Judge Kennedy himself. His logical mind finds great pleasure in this line of thought, and it is evident, his friend and adviser thinks, that he is destined to be very successful in the practice of law. In one thing his purposes have undergone a change. Judge Kennedy has advised very strongly that he should forego the college course. His high-

school education has been so thorough that he can well take the law course without farther delay. Perhaps the vision of happiness that has come into his heart has helped him to this decision. He never has had a real home, you know, poor fellow!

Possibly that expression, "poor fellow," was entirely gratuitous; for no one that knew Stephen Hollister ever thought of him in connection with such an adjective. He was so strong, so self-contained! It was our glimpse into the depths of the heart he so carefully kept hidden from the world that called it forth.

This was to be his last year in connection with the bank. Quite an amount had been saved from his earnings, and he now planned to go the next fall into the law-school of one of our best universities, and avail himself of its advantages. In the mean time he was to pursue his studies with Judge Kennedy, and earn all he could toward the coming expenses.

CHAPTER X.

A BIT OF LOGIC.

GORDON STANLEY was a young law-student in Judge Kennedy's office. The brief glimpses that we have had of him show him to be a self-indulgent, rather self-opinionated young man. He had a bright mind, with considerable acuteness and quickness, which made him appear brilliant on first acquaintance. But it was a shallow sort of brilliancy after all, for his mind had never been trained to anything like solid thinking. He was apt to jump at conclusions, and sometimes this habit landed him in a quagmire of unsound logic.

Perhaps a little experience in working his own way would have done him good. But everything had always been made smooth for him from babyhood. His father was possessed of sufficient wealth to provide all needed comforts and many luxuries for his only child. In the matter of education it was the same. In early life, tutors had been provided to smooth, as far as possible, the path of learning for his

tender feet. His mother, foolishly fond, kept him as far as lay in her power from contact with the common world. He therefore fell a more easy prey to the many petty temptations which beset every boy's path as soon as he was out from under his mother's personal guardianship.

An only child is very apt to grow up selfish and unmindful of others, especially when constantly indulged. Gordon had never known any lack of pocket money, so that he was always furnished with the means to pamper every whim of his boyhood. As he grew older it was the same, save that these self-indulgences ran in more expensive lines. When he went to college he found plenty of ways to spend money, outside the necessary expenses of a student's life.

Even his indulgent father found it imperative to warn him that at this rate there would not be enough means left to enable him to take up a profession.

Gordon was not really dissipated, although he did not refuse a social glass now and then. But thanks to a long line of sober and worthy ancestry, he had no inherited appetite in this direction. He was ambitious, too, after a fashion, and had his heart set upon the law. He

mended his ways sufficiently to modify his expenses materially. He had graduated with his class, and at the time of our story was making a real effort to fit himself for his chosen profession.

The influences in Woodland were good for a young man of his stamp.

There was little real dissipation among the boys who were admitted into good society, and Gordon Stanley turned with disgust from those in the gutter. His ideas of a good time did not lie in that direction. The popularity of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor of Woodland Park Church among those of his clique led him thither as an associate member. With the higher spirit and aims of the society he was, of course, not in sympathy.

The new departure affected him unpleasantly. How could it be otherwise? A nature wholly self-indulgent, its chief aim to have a pleasant, easy time in the world, would not have the least sympathy with or taste for a telescopic vision, revealing needs so pitiful and fields for work so broad.

The influence which had thrilled and awakened natures like Stephen Hollister's and Charlie Carey's, rousing to life their innate nobility and manhood, in him roused only hos-

tility. The religious influences in his life had been few, and Satan had well improved the time for weaving the fetters of self-indulgence around this young man's soul. So, when others were being enthused with desires for nobler living, he had only thus far stirred uneasily in his sleep, spurning the whisperings of his good angel.

But during the winter following the development of the new idea, Gordon took a severe cold. At first he neglected it, thinking it would wear off as usual. But it hung by with a pertinacity not to be mistaken, and at length he was obliged to call in Dr. Ellis. He looked grave enough after making an examination of his lungs and hearing the rasping cough.

"Look here, young man," he said, "if you want to escape a genuine siege of lung-fever, you and I must make a fight for it. Don't leave your room, not even to go into another, till I give you permission. A slight change in temperature may undo all I am trying to do in the way of preventive measures."

A few more words, and the busy doctor was gone, leaving behind him various reminders in the way of medicines. He also left behind a very cross and rebellious patient.

"Nonsense!" he grumbled. "There's no use

in making such a fuss for a cold. I suppose I must obey orders, though," he said, as an unusually hard fit of coughing left him quite exhausted, "for mother would say I must take care of myself. Don't I wish she was here to coddle me this minute !"

In fact, the boy was in sad need of good nursing. Dr. Ellis had realized this fact, and had paused long enough to say to Gordon's landlady, as he went out,

"That young Stanley, up-stairs, is in bad shape. Much depends on to-day, as to whether the disease can be checked or not. I wish you would look after him, in the many ways a woman understands better than anybody else."

Fortunately, Mrs. Lyon was a kind-hearted, motherly soul, and she ministered to his comfort so that he felt less lonely and forlorn. Still, he had so few resources in himself that the confinement grew very irksome.

Dr. Ellis had done another thoughtful act. Stepping into the bank on business, the afternoon of the same day, he took occasion to tell Stephen Hollister of Gordon Stanley's serious indisposition. It needed no reminder to tell this very wide-awake young man what his Master's call was in this case. After banking hours, he stopped in to inquire after Gordon's

condition. He found him feverish, restless, and utterly homesick. His heart ached for the poor fellow, with so little knowledge of the real source of comfort in dark days. It was near his supper hour, so he could not stay at this time, but promised to return later, as he had an unoccupied evening.

By unoccupied, I mean one without any positive engagement. Time was a precious commodity to Stephen Hollister, as he had made the right use of it the stepping-stone to the height already attained, and depended upon it to carry out his plans and ambitions for the future. Had he been living for self alone, he would not have spared the evening for the entertainment of one with whom he had so little in common as with Gordon Stanley. But he had adopted a different motto since that peep through a telescope, a motto which included others as well as himself.

He had hoped to master a knotty law-point that had come up in his study, that very evening. But the Lord had given him an opportunity, and he must improve it before anything else.

Going up to Stanley's room, an hour and a half later, he found that young man in a better frame of mind. His landlady had tempted his

appetite with a dainty little supper, almost as good, he assured Stephen, as his mother could have provided. He was stretched out at full length on his couch, puffing away at a cigar. Gordon's tastes were expensive, and so it was a real Havana whose smoke curled lazily upward in blue wreaths.

Stephen had never smoked. Luxuries and indulgences had been quite out of the question in his life. Who shall say he was any the less a man for it? He was certainly blessed in a cleaner mouth, a sweeter breath, and a clearer brain. Unaccustomed to it as he was, he soon became sick.

Gordon had said, on his entrance,

"I am lazy, Stephen, as you see. Draw up the easy chair, and help yourself to a cigar from the case yonder."

His guest accepted the easy chair, but of course declined the other. The close air, polluted as it was with the fumes of the tobacco, became unbearable.

"I don't wonder your head aches, Gordon," he said. "I have had a little experience in the care of lung troubles, and the physician insisted upon pure, fresh air."

"Dr. Ellis said the temperature must not vary," said Gordon in alarm, as Stephen pro-

ceeded to let one of the windows down from the top.

"Don't worry," he said cheerily. "I will mend the fire a little, and in five minutes the air will be pure, and the thermometer will register the same as before. I am afraid," he said, smiling, "that you will have to choose between my company and that of your cigar, for being unaccustomed to it, my stomach rebels at the smoke."

Gordon's gentlemanly instincts came to the front at once. He apologized heartily, and threw the offending cigar into the stove, where its incense could ascend the chimney without disturbing any one.

"Oh, you don't need to apologize, Gordon," Stephen replied smilingly. "No doubt I appear to you like an old foggy; but I am very well satisfied not to be under the trammels of the habit. It is very convenient, in my case, at least."

Gordon looked at him curiously. It was a new sensation to find a young man so perfectly indifferent to the opinions that prevailed in the world of average young men. To tell the truth, Gordon Stanley himself had learned to smoke only after a hard struggle with a healthy stomach; but fear of ridicule had nerved him to the

distasteful task, till at last he was as much a slave as any of the rest.

After disposing of his cigar, Gordon threw himself again upon the couch, and waited for the next development in this interesting guest of his. It was really refreshing to find a young man with such pronounced and independent ideas of his own.

But Gordon found that Stephen could be excellent company. He quite forgot the missing cigar in the earnest and animated talk that followed. For some time it ran along in smooth and agreeable channels. Then it took a turn, and for a time threatened to run foul of shoals.

It came from a remark of Stephen's, which suggested the foreign mission departure in the Christian Endeavor Society. Gordon thought it would be a fitting time to air some recent objections he had somewhere found, and cherished as an excuse for his want of sympathy for the movement. Besides, he enjoyed discussion, and Stephen was a foeman worthy of his steel. So, with his arms thrown over his head, he began:

"There is one argument against foreign missions which seems to me unanswerable. Statistics show that last year there were two and a half millions of dollars sent out of the country

for the purpose of converting the cannibals and other heathen. Now the country can't afford such a drain as that. It is ruinous extravagance."

Stephen laughed. He, too, had been studying statistics.

"I hope you won't try such logic as that in the court-room by and by," he said.

"What do you mean?" retorted Gordon, a little irritably.

"Don't get peppery, Gordon, and I will tell you. What do you suppose the country paid just the other year for Havana cigars, such as you were smoking to-night?"

"I'm sure I don't know."

"Four million dollars, Gordon. And the only earthly good that can be claimed is, that they meet the craving of an artificial appetite. The evils that they bring I will not attempt to enumerate. Only put it down that four million dollars went up in smoke."

"I can't believe it was so much."

"I'll show you the figures any day you like. Do you know anything about the cost of champagne? Ten million bottles are used every year. Almost as much waste as to send it to the heathen! Then I read that we spend annually about six million dollars for dogs. What about that, Gordon?"

“Why, that you are the best posted fellow I ever saw, and I won’t attempt quoting statistics to you again.”

“There is another side to this matter, Gordon. I suppose you think that the money spent on foreign missions is positively thrown away, and no returns to be expected from it.”

“I certainly had that idea. But go ahead; I shall not be surprised to hear you state with the gravest air that it is the best investment on record. Upon my word, Stephen, I predict the most brilliant success for you as a lawyer. What a power you will have in convincing the average jury!”

“Thank you. The success I am after at present is to convince my friend Gordon Stanley of some very important truths. Facts go to prove that the money put into this cause has paid in rich measure, in a worldly sense. For example, what would we have known about Africa, had it not been for the missionary Livingstone? He revealed its treasures, its mighty rivers, its fertile valleys, its magnificent natural resources. Other explorers have but travelled in his footsteps. And then in other countries. The messenger of the cross carries not only the gospel, but civilization, and the blessings which the gospel carries in its train. With civilization,

comes commerce with other nations. Of course you admit that it is an advantageous thing to have foreign markets opened for our produce and manufactures."

"Certainly; and I can see that there has been a return in some measure for money expended. But are you right in giving all the credit to missions? This is a progressive age, you know, and would not the spirit of our institutions have affected these ancient nations in the course of events?"

"I am afraid you would have had to wait a long, long time before the 'spirit of our institutions' would have accomplished the wonderful things that stand revealed. The spirit of paganism is intensely hostile to everything that savors of progress. Only when the Gospel of Christ begins to undermine paganism, is there any entrance for progress."

Gordon was silent. He could not refute the arguments Stephen presented, especially when strengthened with indisputable facts. Presently the speaker went on.

"Look at Japan, for instance. It was western progress, including Christianity, that awoke her from her sleep of centuries—bursting asunder the chains of superstition and idol-worship, and astonishing the world. I tell you, Gordon, that

all over the earth progress and Christianity go hand in hand."

Just here the invalid had a terrible fit of coughing. It seemed as if he would certainly rupture a blood-vessel in the violence of the spasm. Stephen did all in his power to relieve him, with the tenderness of a woman. When the paroxysm was over, Gordon lay back, white and exhausted.

His companion stood beside him, thinking gravely. It did not seem safe or brotherly to leave him alone through the long night vigils, with the possibility of the return of another attack. But he had planned to study until late, to make up for the evening spent away. What ought he to do?

His mind was quickly made up. "Gordon, old fellow, I am afraid I tired you with my long talk. Now I am going away for a few minutes, to make some necessary arrangements, and then, if you would like, I will come back and stay with you all night."

The wan face brightened. "If you only would!" he said. "You don't know how horrible it seems to think of being here alone, with such times to dread."

"Have you had many such coughing spells?" Stephen asked gravely.

"Only two as hard as that one. But each one makes me weaker and more in dread of the next. It makes a baby of me, and I long for mother."

With an almost infinite pity in his heart, Stephen helped Gordon to bed, and went out to make arrangements for staying. After a brief call at his boarding-place, to let the family know he should be out, he turned hasty steps in the direction of Dr. Ellis' house.

Just before reaching it, he was fortunate enough to meet the doctor coming in from his round of calls. In a few words he was made acquainted with this phase of Gordon Stanley's case, and the depression of the young man.

"Come into my office," he said, "and I will prepare some medicine for you to give him. I am glad," he continued, "that you are to be with him to-night. I feared grave complications this morning; and what you have told me does not lessen my apprehensions. I will be there in the morning," he said, as Stephen rose to go; "but if anything new should develop before that time, be sure and let me know without delay."

Bidding the doctor good-night, he hastened to his self-imposed post of duty. Gordon was tossing restlessly from side to side, and seemed

heartily glad to see him. After administering the medicine, and making the patient as comfortable as possible, he too retired, that his charge might sleep if possible.

The remedies soon took effect, and seeing that Gordon was quietly slumbering, Stephen also fell asleep, for he was weary with the work of the day. About midnight he was awakened by the strange movements of his bed-fellow, whom he found in a severe chill. Here was need for prompt action in very deed! Stirring up the fire, which he had been careful not to allow to go down, he applied hot blankets, but nothing availed to check the progress of the death-like cold, which seemed to reach his very heart. Going down stairs, Stephen roused the landlady and bespoke her aid, also a messenger to send for Dr. Ellis. It was only a few minutes after his return before Mrs. Lyon joined him, and together they battled the chill which was threatening the life of the poor fellow. Almost sooner than they had dared to hope, Dr. Ellis was at the bedside.

He said little, but was at work instantly, instituting the promptest measures in his power for the relief of the sufferer. But it was the gray of morning before the chill left him, and then he was tossing in the delirium of fever.

What was to be done ? Stephen was expected at his post at the bank at nine o'clock. It would never do to leave Gordon in his present critical condition. Dr. Ellis read his perplexity and came to the rescue.

"He must have a professional nurse," he said. "Thank God, Stephen, that you were impressed to stay with him last night. The poor boy might have died in that terrible chill. If you can stay here another hour, I will try and send a relief by that time. Do you know the address of his parents ?"

"I do not, but doubtless Judge Kennedy does, for he is his student, you know."

"Very well. I will see him, then. Watch carefully for any signs of consciousness, or change of symptoms, and report when I see you again."

And the busy doctor was off, to secure a nurse for this patient in such grave danger, and to telegraph the sad news to the loving hearts in the distant home.

Stephen sat by the bedside, sorrowfully thinking. This dear soul, lying in such imminent peril, was unprepared for the possible exchange of worlds. Nothing could be done now save to pray. That could reach the loving ear of the Infinite One, and perhaps yet another opportu-

nity might be given for him to make his peace with God.

His thoughts were interrupted by good Mrs. Lyon. "Go down stairs," she whispered, "and eat your breakfast, which is ready for you on the table. I will stay by Mr. Stanley."

Stephen was really faint with watching and anxiety, and he gratefully accepted the invitation. Much refreshed, he returned to Gordon's room, to find the doctor, and a pleasant-faced man whom Dr. Ellis introduced as the nurse. Thus relieved, Stephen was at liberty for a brief rest before banking hours. He retired to his room, but such a burden lay on his heart that he could only pour it out in prayer to his Father in heaven. The assurance came that it should be answered.

CHAPTER XI.

SAVED SO AS BY FIRE.

THE story of severe and critical illness is not a pleasant one. But what is the reality to the anxious watchers, noting every pulse-beat, every change, and asking with anguished hearts as the slow hours drag along their weary length, "Is it life or death?"

Within twenty-four hours after the message was sent, Gordon Stanley's mother was at his bedside. But he did not know her, and in his feverish delirium he was continually moaning, "I want my mother. Why doesn't my mother come?"

He was her only child, her all, and no wonder that her agony of soul drove her nearly wild. Dr. Ellis saw that she was really unfitted by her anxiety to take sole charge of the patient, and besides his condition was so critical as to require two watchers. So at his advice Henson, the nurse, was retained, and together the mother and helper prepared to fight the terrible battle between life and death.

Stephen Hollister was frequently in to watch the progress of events. Never before had any case of illness taken such powerful hold upon his heart. His own connection with the opening chapter of this sickness, and his torturing anxiety for this young man's soul, robbed him of many hours of sleep. Mrs. Stanley instinctively turned to him as one upon whom she could lean. It did not take him long to learn that she was not a Christian, and had no divine strengthener in this hour of desperate need. It was Henson, calm and collected, who supported Gordon's form in the terrible fits of coughing that each time threatened to snap the thread of life, daily becoming more and more attenuated. At such times, his mother, completely unnerved, could only wring her hands in mute agony.

Henson was a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and he longed that the poor heart-broken woman might find the only consolation for such sorrow. One night, when Stephen was sharing his vigil, Mrs. Stanley having lain down for needed rest, the two young men found how truly they were brothers in the truest sense of the sweet word. They clasped hands in token of the strength of the tie between them, and then the talk turned on the pitiful needs of those in whom they felt such a deep and tender

interest, the sick one in such danger, and the other one soul-sick even to despair. Gordon lay in a heavy stupor, not heeding aught that went on around him, so they did not fear to disturb him as they knelt in prayer. Surely the One who promised to hear the two who should agree as touching anything they should ask, bent from his throne to listen and bless.

Dr. Ellis was unremitting in his attention and care. We may be sure that even in his busy life many a petition ascended to God for these souls in such need of help. For Dr. Ellis was a man who always prayed about his patients; and was not this one secret of his great success in his profession?

Others were praying too. For in the Sunday afternoon prayer-meeting after Gordon had been taken so dangerously ill, Stephen had asked the prayers of Christian hearts for this stricken member of the outer ranks of the society. Special petitions were offered in his behalf, and more than one sympathetic soul took the case to the closet, and kept it there in daily request before the Father.

Mrs. Stanley was made to feel that she was among kind, sympathizing friends. It was little any of them could do, in that terrible time before the crisis, except to sustain her, as far as

such a thing could be, with a sense that she was not alone.

We have just referred to the dreadful suspense that preceded this crisis. Dr. Ellis noted with skillful, experienced eyes its sure approach. That afternoon he went to the bank and asked for Stephen Hollister.

That young man came forward with a sinking heart. Had the time come when the word of doom must be spoken?

But there was yet room for hope. "Stephen," said the doctor, "I want you to spend the night, if possible, with young Stanley. The disease will take a turn to-night, I am confident, and we shall need you. God only knows which way the matter will be decided; and I shall try and be on hand at the critical moment. Henson must help me, and you must take charge of Mrs. Stanley, for any undue excitement at the return of consciousness will prove surely fatal. The fever has drained the vitality to the lowest ebb."

"Certainly I will come," Stephen answered heartily. "But I am afraid you have given me a task beyond my power; for Mrs. Stanley seems completely unnerved."

"You can do more than anybody else," insisted Dr. Ellis. "It is a matter of life and

death; and death may win, in spite of all our efforts. Ah, well! the issues are with God, and we must be content to leave them there."

It was a solemn group that gathered in the sick-room as night's shadows grew black over the earth. It was Wednesday evening, and Stephen knew that earnest prayer would ascend to the throne from the hearts in the weekly prayer-meeting for the soul so near the borderlands of eternity. The hours crept on, and still Gordon Stanley lay in the sleep so like its twin-sister, death. The silence was broken only by the occasional stifled sobs from the mother, standing helpless in the blackness of the shadow. At ten o'clock Dr. Ellis entered, and with him Mr. Stanley, Gordon's father.

Mrs. Stanley threw herself into her husband's arms for a moment, and then led him to the bed. A groan broke forth from the strong man's very soul as he saw his only son, so changed, lying before him.

Dr. Ellis then beckoned the father and mother from the room. Stephen and Mrs. Lyon also received a sign to come.

When the little group were assembled in the hall, the physician briefly stated the case. He requested that Mrs. Stanley should remain down stairs for a few hours, as perfect quiet was so

necessary. Mr. Stanley and Henson were to share his watch by the sick-bed. "As soon as there is definite change," he said, addressing himself to Mrs. Stanley, "you shall know."

So saying, he turned and went back to the sick-room. Mrs. Stanley was almost wild in her refusal to be shut out from her son's room. It took all the powers of reasoning and persuasion that they possessed, to convince her that her absence was safer than her presence at the first return of consciousness.

"Hasn't he been calling for his mother all these days," she wailed, "and how can it hurt him to see me when he comes to himself?"

At last Stephen took the matter in hand. With gentle authority he led her below, saying,

"You must remember, Mrs. Stanley, how very weak the fever will leave him. The very joy of seeing you, for whom he has so longed in his delirious fancies, may overcome him just at the first feeble return to life. He is in the safest hands, humanly speaking, that he could possibly be. Can't you make this sacrifice for his sake?"

Stephen's persistence prevailed, and she yielded the point without farther struggle. Mr. Stanley returned to the room above, and Mrs.

Lyon and Stephen shared the vigil below with the anguished mother.

Presently Stephen felt a light touch on his arm. "Pray, oh pray, for you know how to ask help!" a low voice, broken with agony, sobbed in his ear. Instantly he knelt down, and oh! the intense, earnest pleading that went up for the one whose life was wavering in the balance.

As he ceased, to his unutterable surprise, the mother's voice, so changed by anguish that he could hardly recognize it, took up the petition.

"O Lord, I have never known how to pray. But if the life that is dearer than my own is spared, I promise to give to thee the rest of my days."

"Amen!" said Stephen's deep voice. As he arose from his knees she remained bowed, prone upon the floor, as if the very attitude of supplication might help her in this hour of sore need.

A light knock, and Pastor Seymour entered. Stephen welcomed him more gladly than he could have expressed, for perchance he might be enabled to give a little strength and comfort to the poor mother, who seemed oblivious to all things, passing around her save the terrible need of her boy.

Human aid was, alas! weak and powerless, and the pastor fell on his knees beside her.

And so, in one voice or another, for Mrs. Lyon also could join in the supplication, the earnest pleading went on.

In the room above, Dr. Ellis sat with his finger on the pulse of the sick man. Henson was near at hand to render instant aid, if necessary. Back in the shadow, where his face could not be seen, but where he could note all that passed, stood Mr. Stanley.

A clock in a distant part of the house chimed hour after hour, until twelve strokes had told the arrival of midnight. Still the stupor seemed unbroken. At length Dr. Ellis motioned to Henson to bring a powerful stimulant he had prepared on coming in, and have it in readiness for instant administration. Just as the clock struck the hour of one, Gordon stirred uneasily and opened his eyes.

"Where am I?" he murmured. "Where is Stephen?"

Quickly and deftly Dr. Ellis raised him and put the cup to his lips. Gordon drank it obediently, but looking around in a bewildered fashion, repeated his inquiry for Stephen. Evidently his mind had gone back to the last scenes of consciousness.

Henson had gone noiselessly and swiftly for Stephen; and in a moment he was standing by

the bed. Trying to speak naturally, as if nothing had happened, he said,

"Did you want me, Gordon?"

"What has happened? I seem to have had such terrible dreams. I thought my mother was here, and I could not speak to her."

Mr. Stanley started forward, but Dr. Ellis motioned him back. Stephen was the safest one at the helm of affairs for the time.

"It was too bad about the dreams, Gordon. Go to sleep now, and when you wake up again you will feel better."

"Is it morning yet, Stephen, old fellow?"

His voice choked, almost, this time. Was it indeed morning for the young man, the beginning of a new physical life? However, his strong will enabled him to answer calmly,

"It isn't quite morning yet, Gordon. There is plenty of time for you to get a little more rest."

With a deep sigh, as of relief, the sick man sank to sleep. It was a quiet, peaceful slumber, contrasting greatly with the heavy stupor of a few hours before.

Dr. Ellis watched him in absolute silence for a time, still with his finger on the fluttering pulse. As its throbs grew stronger and more regular he relaxed his vigilance, and said softly,

"Thank God! with His blessing he will live."

A stifled sob broke from the over-strained heart of the father. Dr. Ellis rose and grasped him by the hand in heartfelt sympathy, mingled with the joy of hope.

"We will go," he said, "and bear the good news to your wife. It has been a hard waiting-time for her. Henson and Stephen can be trusted to watch the boy's slumbers for a time."

What a scene there was below! Ever since Stephen's hurried summons to the room above, she had listened, with an intensity of expectation that was painful, for the tidings of life or death.

The good news was more than she could bear. The revulsion from despair to hope overcame her, and she fainted quite away. Restoratives soon had their effect, but by the doctor's orders she was put to bed, that she might rest and gain strength and calmness for an interview with her son.

Gordon's recovery was not rapid. He had been too near the borders to come quickly back to health. His mother nursed him with skill and tenderness, and learned beside his sick-bed what many of her mistakes had been.

The kindness and sympathy of the Christian Endeavorers were a constant wonder to her.

What a good boy Gordon must have been, she thought, to have gained such friends! Her past experience had not been such as to teach her much of the helpful spirit that characterizes these organizations.

What of her vow, uttered in her hour of deepest need? Had she forgotten it?

Ah, no! Night and day it was present with her. If Gordon had the slightest unfavorable symptom, she trembled, fearing that he would yet be taken from her by an angry God, who required that such solemn vows should be paid. She was groping blindly in the dark. She would fain have given herself to the Lord, but she knew not where to find him. In this perplexity the Father had his message and his messenger.

It came about in this wise: Gordon was much better and was rapidly improving. Henson was only on duty now at night. But he had promised to spend a certain Thursday afternoon with him, as Mrs. Stanley was to ride with Mrs. Seymour and take tea at the parsonage.

She was not willing to leave Gordon, even though so much stronger; but he was determined that she should have this bit of change, as she was pale and worn with constant watch-

ing. He knew nothing of the soul-conflict that was robbing her of strength and hope.

It was a lovely winter's afternoon. The sleighing was fine, and the air just keen enough to be a real tonic. It was a pleasant change from the shadows of a sick-room, and now that her mind was relieved from immediate anxiety regarding Gordon, she enjoyed the change. Enjoyed it, I say, until the old haunting trouble of an unfulfilled vow darkened all the sunshine.

Mrs. Seymour had won her love and confidence by her previous tender sympathy. So, in obedience to a sudden impulse, she told her all the story.

It touched the heart of her listener to its utmost depths. Dropping the reins upon the back of faithful Charlie, he was allowed to take his own gait while she tried to deliver her Father's message to this hungry soul.

We cannot dwell upon this scene, but before Mrs. Stanley went back to the bedside of her boy given from the gates of death, the blessed light had dawned upon her heart, and she was one of the daughters of the King.

How should she tell him the story? Never in all her life had she talked with him about eternal things. Her first step must be a confes-

sion. How surprising it all seemed to him! His mother a Christian! All her past teachings had been of the earth, earthy; the world, and its ambitions. He knew he had been very near leaving it altogether, and he knew that he was sadly unprepared for such an exchange. What if he should become a Christian! Could he be one of the genuine sort, like Stephen Hollister for example? He was certainly genuine, and he, Gordon, hated shams with all his heart.

What a new light there was in his mother's face! How sweetly and humbly had she told him of her vow on that never-to-be-forgotten night, and how, through this terrible anguish and fear of losing him, there had come to her this wonderful blessing of love and peace.

Could he leave the pleasures of the world? But, on the other hand, what real pleasures had it ever brought to him? Looking back, with a vision cleared by late experiences, he could see that they had been apples of Sodom. What was that queer talk he had with Stephen the night he was taken so sick? Was that part of the strange things he had imagined? No, for he could recall it so distinctly. Foreign missions, wasn't it? He wondered what his mother would say to this new idea that had run away with so many of the young people?

It was singular, he continued thinking, that his mind should revert so much to Stephen. He seemed like a fellow that always had a good time. But then his good time certainly was of a different sort from what he had heretofore imagined constituted that much-sought-after article. Supposing he should try it?

All this thinking made him weary, for he was yet weak. But, as you can easily see, the deeper waters of his nature had been stirred, and he could never be just the same as before. Yet he was not willing to make a full and final surrender to Christ. Poor fellow! The world as it used to be had been spoiled for him, and he had nothing better in its place. But now a mother's voice had been added to the chorus of petitions that were ascending to the throne in behalf of this young man. It will be strange indeed if some result does not follow.

Two weeks later, and Gordon Stanley had grown strong enough to go home for a long season of recruiting his lost strength. The very next day, in fact, he was to leave Woodland with his mother. It was late afternoon, and Stephen Hollister was sitting with him, while Mrs. Stanley was making a few good-bye calls. She had found some dear friends, through all the suffering and experiences of the last month.

It was a different woman that was about to leave the city she had entered with such wild, rebellious thoughts.

Gordon had not realized the tie that bound him to Stephen until it was about to be severed. He clung to him as only a weaker nature clings to one that has proved itself the stronger. And in these last hours of social communion he felt, as never before, like laying bare his heart before him. But something held him back. Satan does not let his followers go easily. A determined battle was being waged for this soul, between the powers of light and darkness. It was his own will that must now make the momentous choice. Which should it be?

I think the young man's guardian angel must have wept, as Gordon turned away from her whispered promptings and listened to the adversary's suggestion of delay. "Wait until you get home," it said; "then, after you have thought it all over, you can decide like a man, and not because influenced by another."

So to Stephen's earnest, impassioned pleading Gordon gave no sign that he was almost on the point of taking the final step to Christ. He acknowledged the necessity, but waived immediate action. And so it continued until the train bore him away from Woodland, still an

unsaved man, leaving behind him a true, loving friend, whose last words had been, as the final hand-clasp was given,

“I shall never stop praying for you, Gordon, as long as you and I are both above the sod, or until I hear the glad news that you have given yourself to the Lord’s service.”

How the words haunted him! All through the long, wearisome journey they were with him, and in the restful quiet of home they echoed on. The sequel is best told in a letter that Stephen Hollister took from the office a week latter.

“DEAR STEPHEN:

“You are surely the best friend God ever gave a poor erring mortal. Don’t think I am unmindful of your unwearying kindness to me and mine. I have thought it all over here at home until I am almost foolish in my longing to see you. For I have a story to tell, Stephen, a story which I should like to tell you with my own lips. I want to see the joy flash into your eyes at the news that your weak, unworthy friend is also a friend of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Yes, it has come to pass—the thing that you and others have prayed for so long and so earnestly. Why couldn’t I have seen before

how blessed this giving up was? I think, if ever the devil worked for anybody, he did for me. And I was fool enough to let him have his will.

“Perhaps he would have had complete dominion until this day, if it had not been for that sickness. Nothing short of an earthquake would have waked me up, I think. And then you, too, were God’s messenger. Your consistent life, your utter forgetfulness of self, were object-lessons even before I was sick. Then your talk that night about foreign missions! You didn’t know that every one of your arguments, knocking down my cob-houses of opposition, were like stabs to my inner consciousness. Why, it was like seeing in a glass how pitifully small and mean I was, and always had been. Then came that awful loss of consciousness, when I went down into the blackness of darkness, and was dimly cognizant of hell.

“When I came back, your face was the first I saw. My feeling was that I had been holding on to you in some dreadful gulf, and that it was because your grip was strong that I had ever come out. Perhaps it was your prayers, old fellow, for nothing less than divine help could have delivered me from the demons. Thank God, your grip continued firm, and

now I am standing, with solid foothold, upon the Rock of Ages.

“Poor father! It is pitiful, Stephen, to see how solitary he feels, now that mother and I have left him out in the world alone. Prayer hasn’t lost its power, and I know you will join your petitions with ours, that he also may be brought into our happy company.

“I am tired, and must close. God bless you, my more than friend, my brother beloved.

“But before closing, I must tell you that our family physician decrees that I cannot return to my law-studies for six months at least. So you may get into active life before I do, after all. Well, I am sure you will do good, wherever you are.

. “Yours faithfully,

GORDON STANLEY.”

CHAPTER XII.

A FRAGMENT SOCIETY.

AMONG the many outgrowths of the new departure was the "Fragment Society." Perhaps the story of its suggestion and development may be helpful to the workers in other Endeavor fields.

It began this time with Cecile. She was such a thoughtful, quiet girl that an idea dropped into her mind found fruitful soil in which to grow. It always assumed definite, practical shape also, before being passed on to other minds.

The quartette were having one of their real girlish good-time talks in Cecile's own room one Saturday afternoon. There was less opportunity for these exchanges of thought and feeling than before school claimed so much attention. So it was an especially enjoyable privilege.

Cecile had been unusually quiet, even for her. The others had been talking away as fast as possible, trying to make up for lost time, as Katie said. Presently there came a lull, and Lucy Gray exclaimed,

"Cecile has some idea or other brewing, girls; I can see it in her eyes."

"A new idea?" echoed Katie. "Do let us have it, Cecile dear, for there has been a deplorable dearth of such a thing for ever so long."

Cecile smiled in her own sweet, calm way. "Lucy must be a mind-reader," she said. "I have a thought that keeps begging for expression, one suggested by something I was reading only yesterday."

"And you have been mulling over it ever since?" asked Ruth Ellis. "Do tell us, Cecile. I am devoured with curiosity, as Katie would say."

"I hardly know how to begin, girls, to make it clear. Do you ever notice how things fit in together sometimes? Well, I came, in my daily Bible reading, yesterday, to the place where Jesus fed the multitudes with the five little loaves and two small fishes, and afterward commanded his disciples to gather up the fragments, that nothing should be lost. Somehow that command made an impression upon my mind at the time, and I thought a good deal about it. But I only thought as far as saving the fragments of time and opportunity. I had happened to wake up a little earlier than usual, and so I found there was a chance for some more

reading before breakfast. Picking up a paper that was lying on my table, I read the story of a girl that took Christ's words in a much broader sense than I had. Her fragments amounted to such real helpfulness that it set me to thinking anew."

"Tell us about her fragments, Cecile," urged Ruth.

"This girl, whose name was Rachel, was looking about her for the crumbs of blessing she could gather in her basket, for the needy. She had little money to give, and she could not carry loaves or even half loaves to the hungry. But the Lord's words must mean something, she thought, and they must have been spoken to us as well as to the disciples, or they would not have come down to us through so many centuries. What crumbs could she pick up that would be worth the gathering?"

"It was strange, girls, how many crumbs she found, when she really looked out for them. Little by little the idea developed, until it branched in a great many directions. I don't know as I can remember them all. If I had the paper here, I would read you the story, but I mailed it to Charlie this morning."

"Tell us all you can remember, Cecile," said Lucy. "It promises to be very interesting."

"I will do the best I can. For one thing, she kept a large pasteboard box in her room, into which went advertisement books and cards, in fact picture cards of all kinds, Christmas and all sorts. Illustrated papers were carefully saved for this receptacle, and pictures that taught pure lessons. She also became a saver of old books that were useless. If the backs were sound, they served her purpose for scrap-books. She cut out alternate leaves, pasted in her pictures, and thus made them ready for a mission of usefulness in a dozen different directions.

"It was really wonderful how many purposes of good that box of fragments served. She had a houseful of younger brothers and sisters. It became a regular rainy day occupation for them to trim the pictures for her and make the scrap-books. This furnished them amusement, and taught them to think of others."

"What a simple and easy thing to do!" said enthusiastic little Katie. "I tell you, girls, we haven't begun to realize our chances for doing good."

"I haven't half told you about what she did," said Cecile. "Perhaps you will get tired before I get through, for it is quite a long story."

"No danger of that," said practical Lucy.

"It is too suggestive. I am absorbing with all my might."

"She learned to be also careful of the fragments of time," continued Cecile. "So she kept a little portfolio filled with pictures whose margins needed trimming; this made work for odd moments evenings—in the parlor, or while talking with her guests. The latter phase of it interested me, for it was like the leaven. Her example set other folks to collecting fragments also, and so the crumb-gathering spread."

"Did all the pictures and cards go into scrap-books?" asked Ruth.

"Oh, no! I was just coming to that. Many of the pictures, and most of the cards, were made up into small packages and sent in various directions. The mission schools in foreign lands were greatly helped by them, as they were wonderfully attractive to the heathen children, and did good service as rewards. It gave the eager eyes of those far-away children glimpses of things in happy America. The hearts of the missionary teachers were also greatly rejoiced and encouraged at this evidence of the continued love and remembrance of the workers at home."

"Of course! Why haven't we thought of it before?" said Ruth.

"But they were not all sent across the sea," said Cecile. "The home mission schools were not forgotten, and some of the crumbs cheered needy ones in her own town. I mustn't forget one idea that struck me particularly. Rachel gathered all the pictorial advertisements for Sapolio, Edenia, Pears' Soap, Pearline, etc., from the backs of 'Scribner's,' 'Century,' 'St. Nicholas,' and other magazines, making the most bewitching little picture-book you can imagine."

"I can see it!" exclaimed Katie. "Just think how the black and white babies, the ragged yet delicious little urchins, would feast on its pages! I would like it for myself! Cecile, you have brought us a magician's wand!"

"A queer thing to come out of the Bible, Katie," said Lucy, laughing. "I have made up my mind that we don't know anything about what can be developed from a single sentence."

"What did she do with the soap-picture book?" asked Ruth. "I feel an interest in its history. Did the story tell this?"

"Yes; I believe it went to a school in Africa. At all events, Rachel had quite an experience. She received a letter from the lady at the mission where it was sent, telling of the wonderful pleasure it gave her own foreign-born little children. After they had enjoyed it for a while, it

was given into the hands of the native school-children, whose delight knew no bounds. The fathers and mothers also were attracted to the school to see the book, and some of them even wanted to worship it as the white people's 'fetich.' Of course they were not allowed to do this, and new ideas must have found lodgment in their darkened minds. The book was passed on from station to station till it was quite worn out.

"Rachel had more than one basket for gathering up crumbs. She kept one for bits of worsted that she or her friends could save. These were available in many ways: bright soft balls for babies on either side of the sea, wristlets for the laborers exposed to cold and storm, or variegated mufflers for thinly protected ones.

"Still another basket held old ribbons, cravats, and bits of silk.

"Odds and ends of embroidery silk were also carefully saved for this department. In her round of acquaintance Rachel had found some 'shut-ins,' to whom these fragments were great treasures, helping to while away weary hours as they wrought them into quilts and things of beauty.

"One of these friends belonged to the 'Shut-

in Society," and furnished her with names and addresses of these prisoners of pain, so that the circle of those cheered from this basket widened.

"It was wonderful to see how this crumb-gathering grew and extended. From these little things it went on to larger. Many others joined Rachel in her work. In many homes the fragments grew precious for the good they could do for the Master. Half-worn garments were laid aside, remnants of material for clothing, such as accumulate in every house, were put in the fragment store, to help fill the boxes that frequently found their way to our home missionaries on the frontier. I can't begin to tell you of it all. Only this can I add, that Rachel learned to feel that the Lord had given her real riches in these fragments, and that he would require an account of their use."

As Cecile finished, the girls were silent for a minute. Then the irrepressible Katie burst forth,

"I think that *was* an idea worth having. Of course, we believe the Lord put it in our way, and the next question is, How are we to adapt it to ourselves?"

"Let us form ourselves into a Fragment Society," said Lucy, taking as our motto, 'Gather

up the fragments, that nothing be lost.' There is nothing quite as good as a Bible basis, you know."

"But why multiply societies?" asked Ruth. "Isn't this an endeavor, in the truest sense of the word? And wouldn't it come into our Christian work as a part of it?"

"Of course it would," said Katie, "but we read, too, of wheels within wheels. Let us call it a society among ourselves, and make it a dear little endeavor revolving within the big Endeavor."

They all laughed, and Ruth said,

"I accept your amendment, Katie, and we will give it the name that Lucy suggests. But how many shall it include?"

"Just as many as we can get to join us, of course," said Lucy. "The more the baskets, the larger the gathering. I believe it will grow till it astonishes us all."

It was indeed a fruitful idea that had entered the minds of these young workers. For it is true, the world over, that where there is a willingness to do, the Lord always keeps work supplied. Our four girls started out as fragment-gatherers in the same general lines as the Rachel whose story Cecile had given them, but soon found there was almost no limit to the

crumbs that might do good, that are being wasted every day.

The crumb-gathering had indeed begun, on a small scale, with the missionary pictures that were doing such good service in the study of far-off fields. The girls had since continued the gathering of these individually, in order to increase the store, but they were only for use at home. With the new idea in view, how precious every picture looked, and what possibilities were wrapped up in every advertising card!

The suggestion very soon came to them, to make the boys and girls of the mission bands fragment-gatherers also. It was not hard to enthuse them with the plan of preparing information and entertainment for the school in Burmah, where the girls were supporting their representative, and for the one in China, where the boys felt the responsibility of the education of their adopted youthful "celestial." It was wonderful how the pictures and cards accumulated in these baskets. It made entertaining work, too, for the band meetings, this preparation of the pictures for the scrap-books. The actual pasting and arranging were done at times especially appointed for this purpose.

Nor was the enthusiasm confined to the children. The other girls of the Christian Endeavor

Society, or at least most of them, both among the active and associate members, entered heartily into the plan. Dorothy Dutton, Mary Tillinghast, and even Stella Carr, asked to be associated with the quartette directly in the matter. Susie Jefferson gave quite a collection of beautiful cards, which were joyfully received, although they knew she was not to be depended upon for anything but impulsive action.

The young men, too, heard of the movement, and agreed to become partners in the crumb-gathering. Their contributions in the way of cards, illustrated papers, pictures, sample-books—which, with their heavy paper and substantial binding, made fine scrap-books—old neckties, cravats, silk handkerchiefs, etc., etc., were very generous, and the “Fragment Society” was almost embarrassed with its riches. Of course there were plenty of places for all these “crumbs,” but the expense of postage became quite a consideration.

Here the young men came again to the rescue. The fathers, too, at least some of them, helped in making up a fund to aid in scattering the fragments.

Nor did the contagion, if anything so good can bear that name, stop with the young people. There has been so much to tell of the out-

growths and results of the foreign mission departure among this part of the church flock, that the story of its influence on the older Christians has been quite crowded out.

Perhaps it will be better to go back a little, to the earlier months of this eventful winter. Soon after the tour to Burmah, Auntie Brown felt it "borne in upon her," as she called it, to see what could be done to get the women of the church to work in this same direction. She found the leaven performing its mission in other hearts beside her own, and the result was the revival of a long defunct mission circle. Mrs. Seymour was made its efficient President, and systematic study of the fields was taken up. There was no more earnest or interested member than Aunt Patience Kelderby, although her professional duties hindered her regular attendance upon the meetings.

"But I can pray for them, Dorrie dear," she said one day, in a talk with her favorite niece. "I can read, too, and keep posted along with the rest. It makes me happy, also. When I am shut in with some poor sick body, my mind doesn't stay within those narrow four walls, as it used to, but when it can be spared to go away a minute, it flies to the uttermost parts of the earth, where live so many poor souls for whom

Christ died. Why, it has been like a new conversion to me, Dorothy."

This mission circle soon became a very live institution. The fragment-gathering idea found instant acceptance among its membership. These old housekeepers found many things in the stored-up accumulations of years, and such a clearing out of garrets and lumber-rooms and bags and chests had not been known in Woodland Park Church annals within the memory of the oldest inhabitant. The result was so astonishing that they were amazed beyond expression. They could scarcely believe their eyes. What could they do with it all?

They began to look about them. Right there in Woodland their search began, and it caused them great shamefacedness and humility of heart.

"Just to think," said Auntie Brown, "that our eyes should be so blind! Here is our good Sister Hamilton, all bent with rheumatism, and not a soul of us to know that she hadn't an easy rocking chair in which to sit while she waited the Lord's time to take her home. I sent an old one that has been in my garret nobody knows how many years, and I tell you I felt like hiding my face to hear her go on so thankful!"

"Yes," said Deacon Harding's wife, "I have

learned more lessons of the poverty all about us than I ever dreamed. There will be places enough for all the spare crumbs, whether it is furniture or clothing or bedding that we don't need. We have been idlers in the vineyard, and only to think that it took the lambs of the flock to show it to us!"

If it isn't too much of a mixing of metaphors, I should like to say that this particular corner of the Lord's vineyard greatly resembled a beehive, these days. The fragments of calico and worsted were wrought into warm quilts and comforters by these older and more practical hands. These, with outgrown and half-worn garments, cheered the heart of many a toiling and sacrificing home missionary. Basted patchwork for the mission schools, on both sides of the sea, met another strongly expressed need. The left-overs in the culinary department were also utilized for the benefit of sick and hungering ones at their own doors.

The fathers were not allowed to feel that they had no share in this work. We have already referred to one way in which they helped: they grew apt in using the fragments in the produce of the fields and the fruits of the orchard. Auntie Brown had a funnily pathetic story to tell at one of the meetings.



"Last week," she said, "I laughed and cried all together. Father had been finding quite a lot of things he thought we could spare, crumbs out of the abundance the Lord has given to us unworthy servants. Well, one day it was a few bushels of potatoes from the heap he was sprouting in the cellar. Another day it was a quarter of beef, when he killed our old red cow. I didn't say anything against it, even when it did seem like a pretty good-sized crumb, because I thought it was no more than we owed to the Lord for all his benefits. But to come to what I started out to tell you: We have been having a lot of trouble with our sheep, and on Thursday father came in and said,

"'Mother, here's a lamb that's a fragment, sure enough, for its dam has just died; and if you can feed it with the odds and ends of the milk, by hand, maybe we can save it, and it will belong in the basket where all the crumbs go.'

"'Yes,' I said, 'along with the quarter of beef, and the apples, and the potatoes, that you have been dropping in along between times. I think you had better make the whole house your basket, and all that's in it the fragments!'

"Now I didn't say that because I was unwilling, and he knew it. He looked straight into my eyes and laughed, and said,

“‘Maria, you and I have got to make up lost time. We haven’t chick or child but what is well provided for, and the Master wants us to give the margins of our abundance to his poor, and not pare the rind too close either.’

“That’s just what I thought, too; but I had to laugh at the idea of a cosset lamb being a fragment.”

Aunt Patience Kelderby became a rarely successful gatherer of crumbs that would otherwise have been wasted. Her duties as a nurse took her into all sorts of homes, many of them families where God’s claims were but dimly recognized. She made bold, very often, to ask for fragments that were about to be cast aside as worthless, and her story of the wonderful results that were being realized by this aggregation of littles often set a train of thought and influence in motion that could not be forgotten or cast aside. Eternity alone could measure the consequences.

Paul Fletcher had occasion to thank God for this new outgrowth of the foreign-mission idea. Can you imagine what a narrow, confined thing life must be to one trammled and shut in by disabilities like his? If he had not learned the lesson of reaching out beyond himself, in an effort to help others, I think he would have

prayed for death. But the Master has sweet consolations for his afflicted ones that trust in him.

Paul had plenty to do, these days, of work in which he delighted. He was a born artist as well as poet, and the arrangement of the exquisite gift cards, either in packages to send to the schools, or in bright scrap-books which should carry color and glory into shadowed places, was a perpetual joy. I think that these bits of beauty had a first fulfillment of their mission in the happiness they gave him. The girls saved all this part of their work for him. Aside from the pleasure it afforded Paul, it was done so beautifully, and the combinations of color and theme were so exquisite, that they would trust them to no other hand.

And so we see how the work multiplied in the way of these willing workers. School duties were not neglected. The truth came more and more clearly to their minds that the Lord needs trained helpers for his varied enterprises in the world. Never had they felt impelled to consecrate themselves so fully to his service; never had all else seemed so barren and little worth the doing.

Of course there was small chance for idle moments. Life was filled full of earnest work

and endeavor. At home and abroad the needs were pressing and urgent. The better they could be armed and equipped for their share in it, the better service they could render.

And so the happy days went on.

CHAPTER XIII.

SAVING A PENNY.

IN direct connection with the fragment idea of the last chapter came up another, which really formed a part of it, although it was not begun at the same time. It followed in the most natural fashion, however, and was suggested by the need of money to carry out the distribution of the fragments. It may surprise you to learn that the young people had as yet no stated plan for contributing to foreign missions, other than the church collections. Mr. Seymour had thought it best to let the matter take its own time and way for developing. Judging from the past, it was sure to reach that point sooner or later.

Have you noticed that nearly all the new ideas, or rather advance on previous ideas, in regard to Christian Endeavor work originated with our quartette of girls? I think that if you will look over the church circles within your acquaintance you will find that, as a rule, a few leading spirits do the thinking in advance for

the rest. It is the Bible rule also; doesn't it speak of the Church as being like the body, with many members, yet each with a different office? All cannot be leaders; some must be followers.

So I shall not surprise you, when I say that the next step forward in the line of missionary progression was first taken by the four girls. They were feeling a little perplexed at the accumulation of the gathered fragments, with their possibilities of doing so much good, but which could not be sent abroad on their errands of blessing without money. None of our girls had full pocket-books at their disposal, and it would not be right to ask their parents to meet the varying demands of the work.

The first ray of light came from Ruth Ellis. "Girls," said she, "I think we can carry our fragment-saving idea a little farther, and so have at least somewhat of the needful for our plans and purposes."

"That will be delightful," said Katie, a little gloomily, for our bright, merry maiden was, it must be confessed, a trifle discouraged. "If you have invented a plan to make money grow on bushes, we shall all be very glad to hear it."

"Why, Katie," said Lucy, "that does not sound one bit like you! I think the Lord can

help us out in this, as he has in so many hard places. What is your plan, Ruth ?”

“It may not seem very promising to you, and I don’t imagine it is going to bring in large returns. But we have found out what wonders the gathering in of littles can do, and so this will be worth at least a trial, I think.”

“Please come to the point without any more preliminaries, Ruthie,” said Katie. “I am sorry if I seemed cross.”

“The children tried ‘turning a penny,’” said she, smiling, “and I propose we try saving a penny.”

“Saving a penny!” echoed Katie. “What good could that possibly do ?”

Cecile smiled. “You are not quite as quick as usual, Katie dear, in catching an idea. I suppose we are to look out for chances to save the pennies from our expenditures when we possibly can.”

Lucy looked a little doubtful. “I am sure,” said she, “that I should be glad to save all I can, but I do not have much money to waste.”

“Neither do any of us, Lucy,” said Ruth, “but on thinking the matter over, I decided that I could nip a penny here and there from some of my spending. I do indulge myself once in a while; for example, in chocolate

creams; and as they are not exactly indispensable to my health and well-being, I am willing to forego them, and when I feel a special hankering, as Fred would say, coming on, I will put the dime that they would cost into this fund."

"Well," Lucy said, "my indulgences are not many along that line. But father gave me the money for a new dress yesterday, and I will try and squeeze a little on quantity and trimmings and put the results in the fund also."

Here Katie began to look conscious. "Your idea hits me tremendously, Ruth, did you know it? My weaknesses are many, but two in particular lie heavily on my mind."

"Let us have them, Katie; confession is good for the soul," remarked Lucy.

"Peanuts and ribbons!" answered the small maiden, so lugubriously that the rest all laughed. "It seems as if I couldn't exist without either. How could I dress without plenty of ribbons? Like the old woman in Mother Goose, I should have to ask my little dog at home if 'I be I' without them."

"What about the peanuts?" asked Ruth, when the laughter had somewhat subsided.

"I'll try and get along on half-allowance," said she heroically.

“So far, so good,” said Ruth. “Now, Cecile, what have you to report?”

She looked up, smiling. It had been very evident that she was in a brown study.

“Isn’t it too bad to make us expose our failings?” she said. “I don’t care particularly for either chocolate or peanuts, but I do like dainty, expensive stationery. My conscience is beginning to hurt me on that point. I will strive to content myself with a plainer article after this, and put the difference in price into the Lord’s treasury.”

“We have made quite a beginning,” said Ruth. “Let us each provide ourselves with a pretty little box, label it ‘Self-sacrifice,’ and put it in our rooms where it will be a constant reminder of the pennies we may save.”

“They have the dearest little money-jugs at Rayburn’s,” said Katie, “on purpose for missionary collections. Those would be so pretty for us to use.”

“Yes,” said Ruth, “and cost five cents to begin with. That from each of us would make twenty cents for the fund, if saved.”

“Oh dear!” sighed Katie, “I don’t believe I know the first thing about saving. But perhaps I can learn. Anyhow, I’ll begin with the peanuts.”

So it came about that four pasteboard boxes, with the lids pasted on and a slit cut in the top, stood upon as many dressing-cases. They proved to be powerful little preachers, as the sequel will show.

The girls agreed to try and find recruits for this plan. Of course they had no trouble in securing Dorothy, and Mary Tillinghast. Others, too, fell into line. The time of trial was to be two months; after seeing results and comparing experiences, they could then decide whether to continue the penny-saving or not. In less than one week fifteen boxes labelled "Self-sacrifice" were on duty. Each girl that had entered into the compact had seen at once some special bit of indulgence which might be brought into subjection for the Lord's sake. It was found by each, as the weeks went on, that not only one, but many habits of this kind, needed watchfulness and overcoming.

At the end of the two months the girls having boxes were invited to meet at Ruth Ellis' for a box-opening. The winter was past, and the springing grass and the tender green of the maple-trees betokened that the time of cold and frost was over, while the chorus of feathered warblers showed that the glad season for the singing of birds was also come.

It was on a Saturday afternoon, and all the fifteen were present. The boxes were placed on the table, without any marks of ownership, as it was the feeling that the amount saved from self-indulgences was a sweet and sacred secret between each heart and its Saviour. This was not a formal organization, with officers and members, but it was a quiet, private sort of an endeavor, and as such, belonging to the general society. There was no flourish of trumpets for this meeting. No public notice had been given, each one having been asked individually to be present with the results of her self-denial.

They asked Ruth to take charge of the meeting, if anything so delightfully informal could claim that name. There was an atmosphere of sweet and tender feeling evident in the little company. As may be imagined, these were the active members of the Christian Endeavor Society. Only such as are living close to the heart of the Master enter sincerely into sacrifice for his cause. So you will not be surprised that, before entering upon the work of counting results, they knelt for a brief word of prayer. It was not a strange or unusual proceeding for them. These young Christians had been growing, and the winter had drawn them upward to a higher plane of thinking and living.

The exchange of experiences was very interesting. We cannot note them all, and yet doubtless each one of them would be helpful and suggestive to workers in other fields than Woodland. While the money was being counted, Katie said,

“What a blind bat I was when I took my box! Then I couldn’t think of anything I could sacrifice in but ribbons and peanuts.”

“What about the peanuts, Katie?” asked Lucy. “Did you really put yourself on half-allowance?”

“Oh hush, I beg of you!” she answered. “I was foolish and wicked, but it was because I hadn’t thought about it. Not a peanut has passed my lips, girls; they would have choked me after I saw the matter in its true light. And the ribbons, too! I don’t believe the Lord wants me to do without them entirely,” she said, with a pathetic little smile, “because they are really part of Katie Ingersoll. But they shall never be such a temptation to sinful extravagance as they have been.

“And that wasn’t all,” she continued. “There were so many ways in which I would spend a nickel here and a dime there, without thinking much about it. But when I began to watch, it frightened me. I have come to feel that God

will ask for an account of even our spending-money. Every cent in my box would have been worse than wasted, if it hadn't been for the new plan."

"My experience," said Cecile, "has not been just like Katie's, for my temptations were different. When I came to watch myself in the matter, I found that I always wanted the finest and prettiest of everything, even when something less costly would answer quite as good a purpose. It wasn't only in stationery; the same inclination ran through all my wants and my purchases—a luxury-loving taste that I ought to conquer. So I, too, have learned a lesson, which will, I hope, last me through my whole life. I shall be glad of any good the money saved in my box will do; it can never be greater than the good I have received myself."

Hearts grew tender, and eyes were more than once dimmed with tears, as the confidences between these daughters of the King went on. Glimpses were here and there given of real sacrifices, such as involve the denial of actual needs, that there might be something for the Lord's treasury. Glimpses, I say; for such things are not spoken openly; only now and then hinted, and understood by none but those whose hearts are attuned by sympathy. Confidences between

the Lord and a soul are too precious for human vision.

One of the number present at Dr. Ellis' on this Saturday afternoon was Violet Brown, a slender, quiet girl, dressed in the deepest mourning. Yet in the quietness of her face there was not hopeless sadness, but rather the light of an inward peace. She had not been connected with the Society of Christian Endeavor more than three months previous to this time. Her history had made the girls feel a tender sympathy for her, as one whom the Master has led into the valley of sorrow. Within the space of a single year father, mother, and an only brother had been taken from her by death, and she had come to Woodland to make her home with an aunt.

She had found real friends here, more than friends in the Christian young people of Woodland Park Church. Sorrow had yielded its richest fruits in her heart; and her pure, sweet face seemed to our girls like that of a sister. So when her voice was heard in the conversation, all listened with deep interest.

"I don't know as you can call mine really a self-sacrifice box," she said. "My wants are so fully supplied that there seemed small chance for denial. So I put in a birthday remembrance

for three sacred anniversaries that are reckoned no more on earth." Her voice trembled a little, but she went on:

"I thought that if they could know about what we do here, it would be pleasing to them to have the dear Lord's cause remembered for their sakes."

Was not this the most sacred gift of all? This was the question in the minds of the girls as they listened to the touching story. But I think, in the eyes of the Master, the many little acts of self-denial for love of him were sweeter than even this touching offering.

The aggregate results of their two months' effort astonished them all. I am not going to give you the exact amount in dollars and cents, although there was enough to provide wings for a goodly number of their gathered fragments. The fact remains that these young workers had learned one of the most valuable lessons of their lives.

It was unanimously agreed to continue the use of the boxes. "It has been an eloquent little preacher to me," said Ruth Ellis. "I could not think of parting with it now."

Such was the testimony of every one. So the little boxes again occupied the place of honor in the various sanctums of the girls.

“Fulness of time.” “Ripeness of events.” These expressions often meet our eyes in the records of the world’s happenings. They convey the truth that God makes all things ready for his displays of power. As the influences of frost and snow, sun and rain, must precede the ploughing and sowing to insure the golden harvests, so in his spiritual kingdom forces perhaps unknown to us must go before the reaping-times of souls.

All through the winter there had been signs of increasing interest. Mr. Seymour felt it in the Sabbath services, in the weekly church prayer-meeting, as well as in the gatherings of the young people. In the early spring the evidences had become more marked. Souls were heard inquiring the way of salvation. Cold and lukewarm Christians began to realize their condition and the deadly influence they had been exerting; for there is no more efficient ally of the enemy of souls, than a sound-asleep professor. If he can only make the slumber a permanent one, he rejoices more than over the gray-headed sinner, outspoken in his wickedness.

John Carpenter had proved himself a wide-awake, earnest disciple. No half-way measures ever suited him. In the prayer-meetings he

bore faithful testimony for his Master. To him the Christian Endeavor pledge was a solemn and binding obligation, not a burdensome fetter. This principle he carried out in everything. Always ready with a word to show if necessary which side he was on, or to invite a friend to take service under the same blessed Master, Satan found him a decided obstacle in his way.

His influence over Henry Peterson was marked. That young man, as we have seen, had a good mother, and his promises to her kept him from many a danger. Yet this was only a human thread of protection from the dreadful abysses of sin and temptation that assail the unwary. It might easily be broken under sudden stress, and prove unavailing after all.

So far, at least, it had been a great safeguard to Henry. But John saw that he was leaning toward by and forbidden paths. He took him as a subject of special prayer and effort. He was not content to simply plead for him in the closet, he pleaded with him as occasion offered. Henry was a good-natured, easily-influenced young fellow, and it became John's ambition to get the controlling power into his own hands, and save him from those who would only lead him astray. To this end he studied his tastes, adapted himself to them as far as possible, and

where those tastes led downward, endeavored to raise them to a nobler plane. In one sense he became Henry's shadow, sought his company, took him to places of sensible, elevating entertainment, and all for what? That he might win a soul. His task was made easier by the fact that they were daily companions in business. Before he realized it, this rather weak young man was dominated by the stronger nature of his friend.

John had not perhaps the force of Stephen Hollister, but he had gained much in that direction since his conversion. And he himself was being led in turn by a silken tie. Dorothy Dutton, in her sweet simplicity, did not know the power she held over this earnest, whole-souled man. She knew he sought her society, and it was hardly an acknowledged fact, even to her inner consciousness, how agreeable she found it. She was also a young, inexperienced servant of the Master, yet her pure, undisguised sincerity was an inspiration to John. He confided to her his desires and efforts in Henry Peterson's behalf, and his faith was made stronger for knowing that her petitions joined his before the throne for the same object.

Although it was true that Dorothy did not yet know her own mind clearly in regard to

this acquaintance she found so pleasant, John was by no means a sharer in her uncertainty. He had some time before this fully determined that she was the only one in all the world for him; but he dared not make this known too soon, lest he should blight his hopes by undue haste. He must first prove himself worthy of such a treasure, and teach her to love him. He acted wisely in this; and it seemed as if his longing desires might find realization. For there is no tie so strong as Christly service. The same motive was the mainspring of action in each of these hearts; the same Saviour was precious to them both.

At this point in our story events seem ripening for great developments. It was, in religious things, like the hush that often precedes the plentiful rain. The solemnity deepened daily, almost. It was a crisis that called for great wisdom and discretion. Mr. Seymour felt this, and prayed earnestly for grace in this hour of especial need. Deacon Brown visited his pastor one morning about this time, to unburden his soul. The dear man had been pleading for the blessing until the assurance had come.

"Pastor," he said, "it is time to go on. I heard the chariot wheels of salvation last night as plainly as I ever heard anything in my life.

The air all around us is filled with the hosts of the Lord, waiting to help us conquer. It will not be our battle, but His. The Holy Spirit is even now troubling many hearts. The Lord's word never fails."

Mr. Seymour could not withstand the old man's triumphant faith. He, too, was lifted to a high plane of vision, and said,

"We will set the battle in array next week. God grant us a glorious victory!"

"Amen!" said Deacon Brown fervently. "We shall see it. Only believe."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE GLORY OF THE LORD.

“OPEN ye the gates, that the King of Glory may come in.” This was Pastor Seymour’s text on the Sabbath morning preceding the series of meetings whose results are yet memorable in the annals of Woodland Park Church. It was evident that the preacher was speaking out of the fulness of his heart. The hearers listened with a feeling akin to awe, as he portrayed so plainly the solemn need of the open gates, where the Lord was standing already, waiting to come in and bless with his saving presence.

Before the close of the services, announcement was made that revival meetings would be held in the prayer-room of the church every evening during the week. Christians were asked to come up to the work, which was ready, waiting for them, and the unconverted were affectionately urged to seek the salvation of their souls, in this, the Lord’s accepted time.

The Christian Endeavor meeting that same afternoon was characterized by a tender, softened feeling. As we have said before, there had been

a great change in this meeting since the beginning of our story. Then, there was a cold formality, a lack of the real devotional spirit, greatly deplored by the few earnest souls. Now, the pledge was to many an inspiration to truer service, and the keeping of it a heartfelt delight. Stephen Hollister's reconsecration, John Carpenter's conversion and thorough earnestness, were contagious. The trouble now was, to find time for all to take a desired part in each service.

It so happened that John was leading the meeting on this Sabbath. The sermon of the morning had sunk deep into his heart. He longed with inexpressible longing to be so fully consecrated to the Master's work that he could be used by the Lord in some way. The keynote of the meeting was the thought that had been with him all day, found in the single verse of Scripture which he read:

"If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

The power and beauty of the thought carried him quite out of himself, and he forgot the weakness and inexperience that were sometimes such a stumbling-block in the way of his

public utterance. The fire had burned during the solitary hour of communing with God that had gone before, and all hearts were stirred as he spoke to them. "Emptied of self" was the theme; and there was not one present that did not catch a vivid glimpse of what a soul might be, with all its selfish hopes and ambitions, everything that was at variance with the Holy Spirit, cast out; and being thus empty of all defiling influences, its attitude of humble waiting would bring the divine presence in rich, full completeness, to dwell there forevermore. And the climax of the thought was this:

"When God comes thus to dwell in a heart emptied of self, he gives it power over other souls, to lead them heavenward. Only thus, emptied of self, filled with God, can weak humanity become meet for the Master's use."

As I try to convey to you some idea of the thought that came with such thrilling force to the hearts of all present, I am reminded anew of the feebleness of words. They seem tame and lifeless in view of the glory of the theme. After the opening talk was over, they all sang with new comprehension of its meaning the hymn,

"Oh to be nothing, nothing!
Only to lie at his feet,

A broken and emptied vessel,
For the Master's use made meet.
Emptied, that he might fill me,
As forth to his service I go ;
Broken, that so unhindered
His life through me might flow."

Many sang this hymn with trembling voices and tearful eyes. Then, at a word from the leader, all bowed for the sentence prayer. A chain of brief petitions, earnest and heartfelt, and participated in by two-thirds of those present, ascended to the Father's throne.

The testimony meeting, always an unerring thermometer of the state of feeling, indicated a great increase of desire for this divine indwelling. One of the circle rose and repeated these words:

"I am an empty vessel ! scarce one thought
Or look of love to thee I've ever brought ;
Yet I may come, and come again to thee,
With this, the contrite sinner's truthful plea,
Thou lovest me !

"Oh, fill me, Jesus, Saviour, with thy love !
May woes but drive me to the fount above ;
Thither may I in childlike faith draw nigh,
And never to another fountain fly
But unto Thee !"

With such expressions of feeling, and a never-to-be-forgotten drawing near to the Father, the

meeting came to its close. Some present, who were not numbered among the active members, felt a desire to share in the love of so wonderful a Saviour. But this desire had not yet reached the point of outward confession.

How can I record the experiences of the week following? The salvation of God was even at the doors, and it appeared in glorious power with the very first meetings. In one sense, all revival seasons are alike. That is to say, the story, as put into words, varies little. Yet, in another sense, each one stands out as individual and separate in the manifestations granted to the souls of men. It goes without saying that from the beginning, or rather, in the beginning, there was a mighty breaking down among God's children. This must precede any sweeping work of grace among the unconverted.

It is not necessary to tell the story of these weeks in detail. Suffice it to say that before the month which was consumed in this special effort was ended, there had been a large and blessed in-gathering of souls. Probably you will be more interested in results than in the account of the way in which they were reached.

Henry Peterson was among the number that were hopefully converted. Probably you have been expecting to hear this, from what has been

said of John Carpenter's burden of soul for this young man. Praying and personal effort had gone hand in hand; and the Lord is sure to own and bless such endeavor.

But it was most touching to see the joy of Henry's invalid mother over the news. She, too, had been pleading at the throne for her absent boy. Such a letter as came to him in answer to his telling her the glad tidings!

"My heart is at rest at last, my son," she wrote. "For long years it has wrestled with the Lord in your behalf. Now, having enlisted in his service, you are safe."

It is always sad to tell the story of a soul that deliberately turns away from offered salvation. Such a one was Susie Jefferson. She was deeply impressed, and almost persuaded; but the pleasures of the world seemed too alluring, and she resolutely turned a deaf ear to the Saviour knocking at the door of her heart. When Henry made a bold and manly confession of his new-found hope in Christ, and his resolution to live henceforth for His service alone, she sighed, and said, "What a pity! We had some good times together. Now all that is spoiled."

The religious interest spread throughout the entire city and even into the surrounding coun-

try. As a result, the Society of Christian Endeavor of Woodland Park Church nearly doubled its active membership. All its associate members, with the exception of three, among them Susie Jefferson and Stella Carr, were brought into the ranks of active workers. The church was, of course, the chief sharer in this gracious blessing; but as our story has to do with the young people especially, we see more of its effects in this department.

One thing deserves particular notice. Much of this blessed result may be traced to the foreign mission departure. We have seen that it was the means, in God's hands, of rousing our quartette of girls to new and earnest work for Christ. It had been almost a re-conversion to Stephen Hollister; and through this came the blessing of regeneration to John Carpenter. As a pebble thrown into a lake sends out rippling circles, that widen until they are lost to view, so we can catch glimpses of the widening influences that had their rise with this movement, and are broadening until their results stretch far beyond human ken. The older ones, as well, owed much to its inception. It had given them telescopic vision, and this had made clearer eyesight for seeing the perishing ones at home. Aunt Patience Kelderby always

insisted that before this she had been only a quarter Christian.

"It is just wonderful," she had said to Deacon Brown one day, "how patient and long-suffering the Lord is with us poor creatures. He writes down our duty in his book as plain as daylight, and when we read only half of it, and wilfully shut our eyes to the other half, he doesn't blot us out, as I should think he would, but sends along some providence or other to make us see better. That trip to Burmah was my providence; and I thank the Lord for such a telescope as that was."

Others bore like testimony; so Pastor Seymour was not very far from right when he said to his wife a few days after the close of that wonderful meeting,

"Alice, your young people, with their new departure, were under God the starting-point of this whole matter. Your help counted for more than you realized. It has been the means of lifting this church to a nobler plane of Christian thinking and living."

It was the glad, beautiful May time when the special meetings closed. Our school-girls had found their hands full, with this absorbing interest on hand and their duties at the Seminary. Now examinations were pending, and the num-

berless demands that come with the close of the school-year. Glad indeed were they when commencement was over, and they could draw a long breath and rest awhile.

The public schools also released their pupils for the long, welcome summer vacation. Immediately, therefore, came the need of planning for mission band and Endeavor work.

Another joyful event was the home-coming of Charlie Carey. He came back to them the same, in some respects, and in others greatly changed. There was a stalwart manliness that had been unknown in the former time when he was living a life of selfish ease and indulgence. They all felt he had grown, not in outward stature, perhaps, but in that inner sense which reaches beyond the earthly and transitory. His mother rejoiced over him with joy unspeakable. She felt the assurance that he was to realize her fondest hopes and ambitions. His father was also satisfied that a new leaf had really been turned, and that henceforth his only son was to be an honor to the family name.

Cecile saw deeper than either. Mrs. Carey, although a professing Christian, was not in the highest sense a follower of the Master. The world had too strong a hold upon her to be easily cast aside. Mr. Carey, as we have seen

before, was not a Christian at all, and therefore the language of Canaan was a foreign and unknown tongue to him, and its aims and purposes equally foreign and not to be understood. Late experiences had taught Cecile a great deal. With the broadening of her vision had come new views of all matters pertaining to her Master's kingdom. She knew that Charlie was liable to disappoint the ambitions of both father and mother, for he was now not his own, and must obey the behests of his acknowledged Master. The brother and sister were in the fullest sympathy; and it was a delight to this girl to look up to her tall brother, feeling such absolute trust and pride.

Charlie's presence made itself felt in many ways at once in Woodland. His downright earnestness of purpose and devotion to duty made him a power in the Endeavor work. Dr. Ellis rejoiced over this almost son with a joy second only to that of his mother, and with a clearer insight. He saw that he would indeed be a blessing to the world in his chosen profession, which so sorely needs men who are Christians in the highest sense of that word.

The quartette took a walk one June afternoon accompanied by Charlie Carey and Stephen Hollister. They were bound for Roaring Brook,

a pretty stream about a mile out of the city, and their object was, ostensibly, to fish. But it soon became evident that they had too much talking to do to trouble the fish very much. At all events, these swam in peace for a long hour after the arrival of the party who had meditated dangerous designs upon their safety.

Stephen Hollister was soon to leave Woodland. He had closed his work at the bank, and was about to go to a distant city to enter a celebrated law-school. Through the powerful influence exerted in his behalf by Judge Kennedy, he was to have exceptional advantages for the course. Charlie must leave again with September, so the shadow of separation dimmed the June sunshine.

These six had so much to say to each other! It always seemed so, and some envious souls had named them the "Mutual Admiration Society." Not a very original name, surely, and it did not trouble our six people in the least. They were simply six near and dear friends, with the close and warm tie of being brothers and sisters in the Lord's family.

The past was talked over, and recent events reviewed, for Charlie never tired of hearing about the wonderful revival, the results of which were so evident on every hand. It was

a joy to see the Christian workers so wide-awake and aggressive.

Then the story had to be told of the mission bands, and their real zeal and earnestness in the cause. It was an interesting story to the one who had only heard of all these movements through letters.

"I tell you," Charlie said, "these children will grow up with missionary spectacles on, as good Deacon Brown would say. They won't be as blind and stupid as I was when you four girls undertook to get me to take hold of that first program."

"You weren't much more blind and stupid than we were," said Lucy. "That trip to Burmah meant a great deal to us all. It was our first peep through a telescope, you know."

Here Ruth sprang to her feet. "Oh, do you realize," she said, "that it is just our original six here to-day? It hadn't occurred to me before."

"Why, certainly," said Katie. "Don't you know this is a reunion party of the Burman tourists? The idea seems to have struck you with considerable force. Now please tell us what thought that lies back of it brought you to your feet so suddenly."

Ruth laughed, and sat down again. "I sup-

pose I did look rather foolish," she said. "But this was what suggested itself to me: we are all together once more, and no one knows how soon this will be the case again. Why can't we six make another foreign tour together, just to see how it will seem?"

They all sat silent a minute, then Katie said,

"It's a good idea, Ruthie; but where shall we go?"

"Don't ask me; at least not yet," that young lady made reply. "Don't you see the thought is as new to me as it is to you? I should think you would realize that fact from the startling effect it had on me just now."

They all laughed, and Stephen Hollister suggested,

"Suppose you four girls act as a committee, to consult with Mrs. Seymour and decide upon a plan of operations. We will be good and obedient as we know how, and fall in line as you may direct."

"How very good you are," laughed Lucy. "I want to make one suggestion right here, however, if it is in order. All our missionary programs, so far, have followed the same set form we gave them. It has been interesting, of course; but we are getting in a rut in this matter, and I propose we try and get out of it."

"Three cheers for Lucy and her progressive ideas," said Charlie. "I say Amen to Stephen's proposition and also to the motion to avoid a rut. Go ahead, girls, we will be your most obedient servants."

"Well," said Katie, "that matter is settled then, for the present. The home people will laugh at us, I am afraid, if we go back without one little fish to account for the time we have spent."

So the hooks were baited, and for a season a looker-on would have supposed that these young folks had no thoughts for any other pursuit than fishing. It was nearly sundown, the best time for the fish to bite, and a reasonable amount of success rewarded their efforts. But soon the lengthening shadows warned them that they must turn their faces homeward.

The coming program occupied much of the thought and attention of our four girls in the days that followed. To the six it would be more than a mere missionary meeting, it would also be an anniversary of a time that had meant so much to them all. With this feeling what wonder that they desired to make the interest of it notable, even to the listeners who could know little of these inner thoughts and tender associations?



EJY.

Mrs. Seymour was the same dear helper as ever. They found her also desirous of diverting the routine of study and observation from the rut in which it threatened to fall. She was all ready with a plan which would be attractive from its novelty and unlikeness to anything that had gone before. It would require quite a little time and study to carry it out successfully. But this was not a bug-bear to our six friends, and having decided upon the details of the plan, they entered heart and soul into its preparation.

CHAPTER XV.

VIEWS THROUGH A TELESCOPE.

THERE is a story of a woman, a professed daughter of the Lord, who was not awake to His claims upon her. Particularly did she detest the contribution plate. She could not escape it altogether, but she used to ease her conscience and save appearances by giving as little as she could, and yet seem respectable. Her husband was not a Christian but was much more generous by nature, and frequently supplemented her niggardly gifts by much larger ones of his own.

One collection day, the lady started for church with fifty cents for the missionary cause. In vain did her husband offer her more; she declared it was all she meant to give.

The pastor preached upon the needs of the work, and made a touching appeal. In her case it fell upon unheeding ears, and made her drowsy. While the collection was being taken up the organ played such a soft, sweet voluntary, that she fell into a light slumber. A

dream pictured itself before her mental vision. She thought the collector was coming toward her pew with the unwelcome plate. Even in her sleep she felt annoyed. As the man reached the place where she was sitting she glanced into his face. Lo, it was the face of the Lord Jesus Christ himself! Looking downward, it was not the extended plate before her, but the outstretched hand of the Saviour whom she professed to love. As she gazed she saw the print of the nail, and the blood slowly dropping. She awoke in agony. The plate was near at hand, giving her just time to ask from her husband all he had with him, which she gladly offered in His name.

So it had become with our girls. Money seemed to them sacred for the good it could do in carrying light to the dark places of the earth. In the calls from every direction they heard the voice of Jesus himself; and his pierced and wounded hand seemed to be outstretched to receive every offering they made for His sake.

The coming meeting promised to be very interesting because the six in charge of the program had undertaken it as a labor of love. The former plan of a strictly missionary tour was modified, to make an enjoyable variety.

It had come to pass that the missionary programs called out such large audiences that they had been taken from the prayer-room to the audience room of the church above. On this occasion the house was filled to overflowing with those who had come to hear what our six friends had to offer.

Stephen Hollister was leader of the program. The other five were arranged on the platform of the pulpit ready to take their part at call. The opening exercises were somewhat unique. First Stephen, then the others in turn, repeated some distinctively missionary promise or command, all the passages fitting in together like a rare mosaic.

Then the six, standing closely grouped, sang with distinctness and expression the "Missionary Chant," by Dr. Nathan Brown, of blessed memory.

"My soul is not at rest ;
There comes a strange and secret whisper to my spirit,
That tells me I am on enchanted ground.
The voice of my departed Lord,
'Go teach all nations,'
Comes on the night air and awakes my soul."

All through these young people sang this hymn of consecration to missionary work as if it was really the language of their hearts. Per-

haps this was what the Lord wanted in the case of some of them at least.

Stephen began the more general program by saying,

“We wish, dear friends, to give you some views of the hill-tribes lying between Thibet and China on the one side, and India and Burmah on the other. Anywhere else these hills would be called mountains; but lying as they do at the feet of the mighty Himalayas, they are dwarfed in appearance and name.

“But the people living on these highlands are as distinct from their neighbors of the plains as our American Indians are from the white possessors of this country. In color, form, and feature, they are plainly different, while the various hill-languages show a very foreign origin to those of the great nations of China, Burmah, and India.

“Their religions, too, are totally dissimilar. For example, idol-worship is not found in the hills, except in a few cases on the borders of Burmah where the Buddhist faith has taken root. The only worship is that of nats, or evil spirits, whom they endeavor to propitiate lest they do them harm.

“This hill-country is a vast one; it embraces thousands of miles, and millions of inhabitants.

The Assam Valley, watered by the mighty river Brahmaputra, is the part of India bordering on the hills. There is an old trade-route across these to Burmah, although it has not been used by Europeans or Americans, at least within present times.

“There is one very extended tribe called Singphos, on the Assam side, and Ka-Chins on the Burman, that are exciting much curiosity and wonder. The Karens, of whom we spoke when we went to Burmah, think that they have discovered in them their long-lost ancestors; and consequently are kindly disposed toward them. The Karen churches have taken up as their foreign mission work the evangelization of these Ka-Chins. We shall have occasion to give you further glimpses of them later on.

“On the Assam side we have some strange and interesting hill-people. It would take the greater part of the evening to give you even a list of all the tribes; so we will select the Garos and the Nagas to present before you at this time. Their customs, religion, and language will give you a fair idea of the rest.

“We purpose to show you some pictures to-night. We have no magic lantern, or illuminated canvas, to aid in portraying distant scenes. But we hope to hold up before you a magnify-

ing glass, through which you will catch, by our word-painting, some glimpses of these keen, intelligent peoples, for whom our Christ died. The first picture will be of a Naga village."

Ruth rose, and coming to the front of the platform, said,

"See yonder hill-peak, five thousand feet high. A large patch of ground around it shows signs of cultivation. The houses stand in rows crowded quite closely together. The shape of these is very peculiar. The eaves of the steep roof come down on the outside almost to a level with the floor. The walls are made of a sort of coarse matting, joined to the roof at the top, and to the floor at the bottom. On the sides they are about four and a half feet high, and at the gables it is perhaps ten feet from ridge of roof to the floor. There is one large room, about fifteen feet by twenty-five, and if the man is not too poor, he will have a floor to this room made of split bamboo braided, and resting on a bamboo platform. Beside this room, is a smaller one in the rear, and another larger one in front, which is used for rough work. Near the centre of the large inner room is the hearth for the fire. Here the cooking is done and here the Nagas sleep at night. In some part of the room the fowls roost, and

sometimes a wild tiger-cat creeps in to steal a chicken. The doors are always at the end of the house, and as there are no windows or chimneys, the smoke stains and blackens everything, and nearly strangles a foreigner.

“Passing out of the house for a breath of fresh air, we are filled with admiration at the enchanting view from the summit of this grand mountain. Mountains to the right of us! Mountains to the left of us! Mountains before us! Little hills below us and mountains above us! Range upon range, ‘peak on peak afar,’ they lift their towering heads in majesty, or perchance, hide their heads to kiss the sky behind a fleecy mantle of white cloud. Just over there on that nearest range is another large village; but although it seems so near it is not less than forty miles distant. And on this other side is spread out the vast panorama of the plain of Assam, towns, jungle, and stream.

“We have come here by a winding ascent of three miles, over a cart road, the only kind in the hills. All around us are the wild Nagas. Can you see them? Well-formed, athletic, fierce, always with the spears in their hands which they throw with terrible dexterity, they have been since time immemorial the terror of the more timid people of the plains. What the

scalp is to a North-American Indian, the head of an enemy is to a Naga. Their raids made them such dangerous neighbors that the English government was obliged to take them in hand, and after her usual fashion annex the Naga territory. Then she had to subdue it, and now the Nagas are forbidden to kill one another, which they regard as an atrocious interference with their rights.

“We see around our village the rice-fields which furnish the people with food. They labor after the hardest fashion for every bit they raise. For work they use no animals, in fact animals would be hardly available up here on these steep hills. Of labor-saving machines they know nothing; their implements are of the most primitive kind. Usually the same land is tilled for two successive years and then allowed to return to jungle. Their ploughs only stir the ground a little depth, and in so doing they kill the small roots which hold the soil, and when the heavy tropical rains come the richest of it is washed from the hillsides.

“Everything must be brought to our village on the backs of men. So the rice crop must be harvested; the firewood from the forest jungle, the timber, bamboo, and thatch for houses, and the water also, frequently from springs many

rods from the houses. Everything must be brought up the hills to the home on the crest. The thread for their cloth is all twisted by hand, and woven in very small hand-loom by slow processes. So you see the mere living means hard work for both old and young. Do you wonder, then, that it is hard to keep the school-room full?

“‘A school-room?’ you ask. Ah, yes! for the missionaries have been here before us and that neat little bamboo house nestled among the others, is the school-house where a native teacher, from the plains below, presides. But please keep the picture of our village in mind as others will add finishing touches.”

Charlie Carey rose, and took up the word-painting, as follows:

“A Naga chief once described his people in this way:

“‘The Nagas are like birds and monkeys, lighting on this mountain, or stopping on that; and no white man can live among them to teach them. As soon as the boys are old enough the hatchet and spear are put into their hands, and they are taught to fight and make salt; beyond that they know nothing!’

“You have had a glimpse of the rice-fields; now you shall see them harvested. The sur-

rounding slopes are beginning to turn yellow. To morrow we will not be admitted in person to the village as it is to be their rice-cutting genna.

“No Naga ever begins anything of importance without first having a genna, or general holiday. While it lasts every one not belonging to the village, or family, as the case may be, is excluded. But this feast-day being over we shall be at liberty to watch their operations.

“See those little groups of Naga men and women passing in single file along their jungle paths toward those yellow slopes. The baskets suspended from their foreheads hang loosely against their backs. The men, as is always the case when going to the jungle, carry their spears and dāos. Some of the women have in their baskets gourds full of rice liquor; and there is one woman from whose basket a large roll of bamboo matting extends far above her head, looking not unlike the smoke-stack of a portable engine pitched forward at an angle of forty-five degrees; and here is a man carrying on his back an enormous basket reaching above his head, and measuring not less than five or six feet across the top.

“Let us watch a group of these harvesters at work. The most of them are vigorously using their dāos. The dāo is well described as a

straight, heavy corn-cutter. This is used by a Naga for an endless variety of things. At this time they are using it to cut off the rice just below the heads. Now the great basket comes into use. In it the grain is carried to the threshing floor. The man carrying it is quite covered up, and looks like a moving mountain. The threshing floor is the large bamboo mat that we saw the woman taking to the field. While the others reap, this man is dancing on this mat, treading out the grain with his feet.

“At night they joyfully return with their baskets filled with this threshed and winnowed rice. All their burdens are carried by means of the broad strap across the forehead, which suspends the load against the middle of the back. It is cooler up here on the hills and the work is performed with greater ease than in the heat of the plains. Besides rice, the Nagas cultivate cotton, yams, beans, and tobacco. Some of the women eat but little meat, but the men are very fond of flesh. When a party goes down to the plain and finds a cow, buffalo, or elephant that has died, they greedily carry off the flesh, even though the stench be too great for a white person. By burying this meat a day or two in the ground, and then drying it over the fire, it is

improved, although not appetizing to a foreigner."

Next came Cecile's turn. "Come to our village," she said, "and witness a Naga funeral. First of all, comes the cutting of the cow which is to be sacrificed before the door of the house where the dead body is lying. Much pains must be taken to secure a just apportionment to each one of the relatives; first a little piece of the fleshy part without bone, next a little piece of the ribs or some other bony part, then a little piece with skin and hair attached (it goes into the pot, hair and all), then a little bit of the fat, little bits of the liver and lungs, and a small piece cut from each of the stomachs. All this is the share of each person, and will enter into the feast held after the burial.

"The open grave is just in front of the family dwelling-house, and about twenty paces distant. Almost every house in our village has graves before it; some under the very eaves. You can see many other graves on the hillsides outside the village. They are rectangular mounds, from one and a half to four feet high.

"While several men are engaged in cutting up the cow, six or more others come into the yard bearing on their backs broad slabs of slate-like stone, which they have brought from

the river bed, two miles away and two thousand feet below. These are placed near the open grave. Two other men take a wide, thick, hewn plank, and begin with their little narrow axes to hew it into shape. First the corners of the plank are rounded off. It is then made narrower at one end than at the other. Then one side of it is hollowed out to a considerable depth, leaving the edges all around standing up like the edges of a trough. This is to place the body in, for the Nagas usually have no use for coffins.

“This, as in the Bible story, is the only son of a widow. All day long she has been hovering around the dead body uttering monotonous, plaintive wails, and recounting in melancholy cadences the merits of her boy. Now the other mourners begin to come in and the wailing and loud lamentation become more intense. A perfect frenzy seems to have taken possession of everybody. Such piercing, deafening shrieks! Such heart-rending sobs and moans! Such fierce shouts and angry storming at the spirits who are supposed to have robbed them! You never have seen anything like the jumping, and leaping, and stamping, the frantic beating of breasts, and violent threshing of the earth and air with their mantles. The utter abandonment

to grief, and the pouring out of lamentations and tears, passes all description. It must be seen to be realized. It is almost impossible to look on and not be drawn into this whirlpool of excitement and grief. It is not manufactured lamentation and mourning; it is awfully and intensely real. It reveals clearly the horror of death to these people who do not know anything about a resurrection, and who believe the air is filled with spirits who only work them harm, and whom they cannot love, but must worship to prevent them from doing evil. The Nagas do not like to speak of what may be beyond the grave. This funeral scene reminds us that death is here, and that to these darkened souls it has a double sting.

“In the midst of all this dreadful turmoil of grief the body is placed on the plank and borne to the grave. Every step of the way from the house to the grave, the frenzied crowd keep up their howling and sobbing. They redouble the fierceness of their efforts to drive away the spirits. A spear is waved around in the grave to clear it of demons, and a gun is repeatedly fired into it for the same purpose. Can you imagine such a dreadful mingling of sounds?

“The grave is rather wide; and the body is placed as close as possible to one side, leaving

plenty of room for a man to stand in the other and work. A spear is placed beside the corpse and a few grains of rice are put in its hand. The stone slabs are handed down and placed with care in a leaning position, so as to shut the body in an angle of the grave, and keep the loose earth from falling upon it. Smaller stones are used to fill the chinks, and then the whole is plastered over. Then the earth is thrown over all, and two men work hard packing it as it falls. These tombs are very substantial, and are finally marked by a carved pillar. Such is a burial in Naga land."

Here Lucy took up the theme as follows:

"The others have referred to the religion of the Nagas as being demon-worship. As you may suppose, this has no hold on their affections, as they only seek to propitiate them as powerful enemies. They see these nats, or spirits, in everything. They take little comfort in life, being under the bondage of perpetual fear. When they really understand the Gospel message, it is indeed to them 'good news,' and they receive it far more readily than the priest-ridden people of the plains, who worship idols. Indeed, one of their old traditions says that at some time in the future, heaven and earth are to be mixed up. A wise man of

their tribe talking with one of the missionaries, said that now he understood this. Christianity fulfilled the prophecy, for it is a religion from heaven to earth, taking its disciples from earth to heaven and filling the world with heavenly principles.

“Let me fill out the village picture before you with one sad scene. A little child lies dying in its mother’s arms while she, clasping it to her bosom, is screaming in its mouth, ‘Oh my baby, come back! Come back! Why will you leave your sorrowing mother!’ At the same time the father shrieks in one ear, a neighbor is calling loudly in the other ear, and when these become weary others come to their relief. The Nagas hope by such means to keep their friends from leaving them. They blow in the eyes of their dying, to keep them from closing them; sometimes even blowing sparks of fire up the nose to arouse their consciousness, setting them up, shaking them as long as there is a bit of life left. If the missionaries plead with them to let their friends die quietly on their plank beds they say, ‘Our dying ones will not stay unless we thus work over them and keep calling to them.’”

Stephen as leader, now announced a change of picture. “We have shown the Nagas to

you," he said, "and another scene will take its place. The Garos are comparatively near neighbors, although two ranges of hills intervene. They have had the reputation of being more savage and bloodthirsty than any other of the hill-tribes; and yet they are far more honest and truthful than their neighbors and the word of a heathen Garo may be implicitly trusted. They are certainly no cowards, and a Bengali skull was once considered a necessary part of the equipment of a brave Garo. As usual the English Government took the matter in hand, annexed Garo-land, and placed it under the strong arm of the law. They are well situated for development into an industrious and prosperous people, for their country is fertile, stretching out into the rich plains of Bengal. We will present to you a picture from this hill-tribe."

Katie now became artist, as follows:

"I will show you Tura, a Garo village on the highest of the lower range of hills, about 2,000 feet above the sea. Directly east of the station rises Mt. Tura, 2,000 feet higher still. As there is a bridle path to the summit our ponies can take us up the steep ascent in about two hours; and once there, you are reminded of a certain time when the tempter showed our Lord all the

kingdoms of the world. Four thousand feet is not so very high for a mountain, but the relation of this peak to the surrounding ones is such that the panorama spread out before us is scarcely surpassed in any part of the world. So far as our natural eyes, assisted by the clear atmosphere and even powerful field glasses, can reach, there seems to be nothing to prevent our seeing to the ends of the earth, unless the lofty Himalayas might shut off the north Pole. Forty miles away, and for over one hundred miles, we can see the noble Brahmaputra like a silver line, as it leaves Assam and turns southward to the Bay.

“Coming back to the station, we see that the hillsides are covered with primeval forests, with very little grassy jungle beneath. We see black, tailless monkeys in abundance, and a few beautiful golden pheasants. The houses in our village are low, dark, and smoky, raised on posts, with grass roofs and bamboo sides and floor, usually plastered with mud inside and out. The roofs are of grass or thatch, and quite steep so that the rain will run off easily. The grass roofs furnish a better protection from the heat than any other, and are kept in place by a sort of network of bamboo, tied on as it is needed. They neither level their sites, nor suit

their buildings to the lay of the ground, but carry the floors out horizontally from the hill-side, props supporting the outer ends. The village bachelors all live in one long house, round the sides of which are bamboo bunks covered with mattresses of bark.

“Their taste in the matter of food we should think rather peculiar. In the old bloody days, at their great entertainments meat and liquor were wont to be served in a human skull. At such times a puppy was coaxed to eat all the rice it would, and was then thrown in the fire and roasted, making a most delicious dish, according to their way of thinking. Milk is an abomination to them, as they prefer blood boiled till it is green.

“The Garos are active and muscular when young, but grow fat in old age. They wear very little clothing. Their weapons are the spear and sword. A Garo’s strong point is traps. Animals and men are alike powerless to detect his ambuscades or avoid his gins. To give you a specimen, imagine a long flexible pole fixed at its larger end between two stout posts, the line joining these being so placed as to impart a spring motion to the pole when pulled out of its normal position of rest. To the thin end of the pole, and at right angles to it, is fixed a

long bamboo spear. The trap is set by drawing back the spear to a post in the hedge, where it is held by a single trigger, to which is attached a thin creeper passing across the deer-track. The deer touches the creeper, and is transfixed by the spear.

“The religion of the Garos is demon-worship. The evil spirits have to be constantly propitiated by sacrifice. Every field, footpath, cross road, and bathing-place has its little bamboo shrine, smeared with blood and decorated with blood or egg-shells. When sowing begins a monkey is crucified at the entrance of the field; but if a fowl is used in sacrifice, it is afterward eaten. When a death occurs the friends are summoned, drums are beaten all day around the house, and at night the body is burned in the midst of a great number of friends and relatives who sit around the pyre, beating drums and blowing horns. After the corpse is consumed a procession is formed which circles around the embers, and each man throws his drum-stick on the fire. Drinking and feasting last through the night. Next day the ashes are collected and buried with a little money. Then the burial place is covered with a bamboo structure, decorated with white and violet cloth. It is also adorned with grotesque carvings in wood. With-

in this monument a live fowl is placed with food to last it for two months; at the end of which time the fowl is sacrificed, and the whole burnt down.

“ ‘Woman’s rights’ seem to flourish in the Garo hills; for while either party can propose marriage to the other, only the woman has the right to reject the proposal. If trouble arises the husband can get a divorce only by giving up to her and her children all the property; but a woman can divorce her husband at any time. Although the men do not usually abuse their wives, they expect them to obey. The Garo women are very homely, yet they make good, faithful wives, and perhaps merit all their unusual privileges.

“ You have had a glimpse of their demon-worship. But this has a very weak hold on the Garos and if they see that no one suffers from omitting the sacrifices and that medicine does more for their sick than religious rites, they are ready to give them up. When an earnest missionary talks with them they are quick to see the folly of their superstitions. None of these hill-tribes have written languages of their own, and one of the first things is to reduce the barbarous tongues to written forms—a boon which many nations have received from missionaries.

Not until this is done can they have either Bible or school-books in their own language.

“Light is breaking over these hill-tops, and we pray that the day may hasten when every peak shall be ablaze with the glory of the Lord.”

“Again the scene must shift,” said Stephen Hollister, “and bidding good-bye to the tribes on the Assam side we pass over to the Burman portion of the hills, where the Karens, and their distant cousins the Ka-Kyhens, or Ka-Chins, are found. In many respects the pictures may seem similar, yet the reality exhibits many points of difference.”

This was the signal for Charlie Carey to come to the front once more. Although the hour was getting late the audience showed no signs of weariness as he began as follows:

“We have made brief mention of the Karens in the tour to Burmah. There are a great many tribes under different names. Some travellers have been inclined to believe them of Hebrew origin. They have a tradition, no one knows how old, that some day the white man would come from the west, and bring them their sacred book which they had lost in some past age. As a general thing they have not taken up with the worship of idols, but sacrifice to the demons.

“The Ka-Chins are a totally different people, and are wild and warlike. But the Karens think that they are closely related, and there is good reason for believing that there is some truth in the matter. I will only detain you to give you the picture of a Red Karen village, which may whet your appetite for further knowledge of these strange peoples.

“The Red Karens number more than two hundred thousand. They build their bamboo houses very solidly, and they last many years. One of these houses will hold four to ten people. It consists of one long room in which the cats, dogs, and hens live with the family; the rice is cleaned, cooked, and eaten, all in this one room. These houses are set up on posts six to seven feet high, and all the cattle, buffaloes, pigs, ponies, and goats are herded under the house. These houses are never swept or washed, and you can imagine their condition after a few years.

“The women perform the hardest part of the labor. They are fond of jewelry, and frequently make holes in the lobes of their ears that will admit a ring more than two inches in diameter.

“The Red Karens are devil-worshippers, and the bones of hens, birds, pigs, and animals are their oracles. The way they try the chicken

oracle is this: a man takes a small fowl in his hand, and commencing to choke it, he moves it up and down in front of him, telling it to go to heaven and ask the angels whether the things he desires to do will prosper or not. By the time his prayer is finished the chicken is dead; then he takes out the small bones of the leg and inserts bamboo splits into the air-holes of these bones: if these air-holes are parallel the answer is favorable.

“To illustrate this oracle business take the following incident: a village had the small-pox. They consulted the oracle and it said that if they would shoot a man the disease would leave them. As there was no one in their own village who was anxious to be shot they went and shot a man in a village about a mile away. This excited war and they had a two days’ fight, killing eight men. That settled the difficulty but did not remove the small-pox.

“Every family makes frequent sacrifices to the demon to keep on the right side of him. They do not give him anything, however, which they can use themselves. If a rice-pot is broken that is the one offered to the devil to cook his rice in. This will answer every purpose, as they consider the matter.

“Marriage customs are much alike among all

Karen tribes. There is considerable choice allowed in the decision. They have a big feast a few days or weeks after the engagement, and on the second day the bride and groom, with the best man and bridesmaid, sit around a dish of rice placed on the floor. The ceremony consists in the bridesmaid taking a handful of rice and feeding the bride, while the best man does the same for the groom. After the feast, the newly married couple remain with the bride's parents a few days, while the people of the village are building them a house. When this is done they get a rice-pot and set up for themselves.

“The Gospel has made great advances in Karen land, and now the Christian Karens are sending missionaries in turn to the wild Ka-Chins. Much as has been done, the borders have scarcely been touched. The darkness of demon-worship, holding its followers in a bondage of fear, is yet powerful. When shall the full day burst upon these hills?”

Thus closed the pictures of life among the hill-tribes of Asia. The telescope had been held once more to the eyes of God's people in this part of favored America. Did it enlarge their vision? We shall see.

CHAPTER XVI.

ONE RESULT.

THESE were hard days for Charlie Carey. Perhaps this announcement may surprise you but it is nevertheless true. We do not leave behind us all the valleys of decision when we enter earnest Christian service.

For some time he had seen this valley stretching out before him. The work for the Master that he had found at college, only deepened the conviction that God was going to require a special consecration at his hands. The thought was not altogether welcome. It involved too many things. Yet Charlie was thoroughly committed to the path of duty, wherever it might lie. He only needed to have it made clear.

The missionary meeting, with his part of the program, intensified what had been somewhat indefinite before. The solemn words of the chant which the six friends had sung together on that evening, seemed to him like the voice indeed of his departed Lord, saying, "Go, teach all nations." He felt that in singing them he had made an irrevocable promise.

Many considerations rushed into his mind. His mother! He knew too well what she would say—how bitter would be this decision to her. It would be almost as great a disappointment to her cherished hopes as his former useless life would have been. How could he bear it? And then the thought came of his father, not a Christian, and of course utterly out of sympathy with any such scheme. He certainly had a right to be heard, as a father who was sparing no expense to fit his son for the position in life he expected him to fill.

And there was still another, whom he desired to have and to hold as his heart's dearest treasure through all the future years. He knew, or thought he knew, what she, earnest and faithful as she was, would say. He feared no opposition from this source. But her parents and friends who cherished her as the very apple of their eye, would not willingly consent to a separation that would put half the distance around the globe between them.

He had taken Katie home as usual, after this momentous meeting that was to exercise such an influence upon both their lives. His heart was oppressed with a heavy burden. The girl at his side wondered at his silence and constraint. She little knew what a conflict was

going on in his breast, one which he dared not reveal to her. No, the question must be decided between himself and the Lord before any human heart could be allowed to lend its weight of influence. But one little remark of hers was treasured up in his memory. They had been talking about the program, and how near it seemed to bring those far-away peoples. "Charlie," said she, "do you know, I seemed to see myself on those hills and trying to point those poor heathen away from the demons they so feared, to the blessed Jesus who is stronger than all the evil spirits. I never thought of such a possibility before; but it appeared to me it would be such a sweet privilege."

Charlie could not have answered her had his life depended on it; at least not just then. He was conscious of a wild longing to tell her all, and ask her to go with him on a mission of mercy to these benighted ones. But this must not be, for others had a prior claim to the knowledge; and besides he had never yet spoken one word of love and a united future.

She wondered at his unresponsiveness, and felt almost hurt, for it was very unlike Charlie.

At last the young man found himself alone in his own room. He felt like a person with a large contract on his hands; one which he can

not see his way clear to fulfill. Long he sat there, buried in thought. What was it that the Lord required of him? No light came to illuminate his perplexity for all his troubled thinking. The darkness and doubt grew deeper and more painful. The burden became too heavy to carry alone and he betook himself to his knees. How long he remained there he never knew. His whole soul went out in a longing, beseeching prayer for grace and guidance. The question came sharp and distinct to his mind,

“Are you willing to give up home, parents, friends, native land, and even Katie, for Me?”

It was a hard question. He wanted to be a brave soldier of Christ but you see this assailed him at all his tenderest points. “Lord, show me clearly what thou desirest me to do!” This he said over and over again, until the supplication became almost an agony.

God does not take delight in such seasons of mental anguish in his children. Only as needed discipline and a preparation for work he has for us to do, does he permit them. As the old Oriental poem has it:

“Tell him that his very longing is itself an answering prayer;

That his prayer, ‘Come, gracious Allah,’ is my answer,
‘Here am I.’”

“Every inmost aspiration is God’s angel undefiled ;
And in every ‘O my Father,’ slumbers deep a ‘Here,
my child.’”

So it was with Charlie Carey. When God had fully tried the strength of his desire and determination to serve him in any way of his appointing, then peace, full and deep, filled his soul. Before this young soldier had risen from his knees he was solemnly pledged to foreign mission work. He knew that trials, sharp and sore, awaited him. Perhaps he must give up all that made the future seem sweet and desirable. But it mattered not. His duty had been made plain, and he had promised to walk in its appointed path.

His mother was entitled to his first confidence. But on going down to breakfast he found she had taken the early train for the city a few miles distant to spend the day. His over-charged heart craved earthly sympathy, and seeking Cecile, after breakfast, was fortunate in finding her alone in the library, and at leisure.

The conference between brother and sister was long and mutually comforting. Charlie was surprised to learn that Cecile had guessed something of his recent impressions of duty, and her full, loving sympathy was inexpressibly sweet to him after the conflict of the preced-

ing night. She had become so familiar with needs abroad, thanks to the telescope of missionary study, that it seemed to her a precious privilege to have her dear brother a worker in the white harvest-fields the glass had revealed. The world had grown smaller to her vision since far-away things had been brought so near.

"I should go as a medical missionary, Cecile," Charlie had said. "I should then be following out my chosen profession, for which I have some special aptitude, I think; and certainly the bodies of those people need helping as well as their souls. But perhaps father will not consent to waste his money in preparation for any such folly, as it will seem to him."

"I have thought of that, Charlie," said Cecile, "but I think his objections will be more easily overruled than mother's. Poor mamma!" she added tearfully, "it will be a great blow to her, Charlie."

"Don't I know it?" he said, rising and pacing the floor. "The thought of telling her makes me a miserable coward. But, Cecile," he said, stopping in his steady march to and fro, "what can I do? I have promised the Lord, you know."

"Go on trusting in his strength, like the brave soldier you are," she answered.

"You don't know," said he, "how this passage has rung through my ears: 'He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me.' Pray, Cecile, for I feel very weak for the conflict that I know is before me."

They went up to Cecile's own room where they would be free from interruption. Together they prayed and talked, Charlie finding that his quiet sister was a host in sensible, helpful advice.

Can you see the scene of the next day when with much uplifting of the heart to God for strength and wisdom, Charlie told his mother all the story? Alas! that so many of us follow the Master so far off that we put stumbling-blocks in the way of our loved ones whom He Himself is leading!

Of course she was very unreasonable for a long time. Why should Charley want to go on such a fool's errand when life was opening so fair before him? Did not the Bible tell children to honor their parents? Was it honoring her to break her heart, and cruelly disappoint her dearest hopes? She refused to listen to any reasons he could offer, and finally appeared likely to go into violent hysterics unless he promised to give up this wild, preposterous idea. He was obliged to leave her without feel-

ing that he had made one inch of headway against her opposition. He called Cecile to minister quieting remedies, and soothe her if possible.

But he was the one in need of sympathy as he went out from his mother's presence, feeling almost as if he had the brand of Cain upon his brow. What could he do? He must either go abroad to the perishing millions and please the Lord, or stay at home to please his mother. Duty could not lie in two directions. I am sure you do not wonder that he felt that he was in a hard place.

But God had a way out, although it was not either an easy or a pleasant one. The shades of night were already falling when Charlie left the house and wandered aimlessly down the street. His mind was torn with conflicting emotions, and he did not notice whither his steps were taking him.

Suddenly there rang out on the night air the cry of fire! It is always a terrible sound and one which stirs the pulses to swift action. Charlie roused from painful reverie, looked up to see the flames shoot upward from a large tenement house on Taylor street. It only took a moment to reach the scene of the conflagration and to plunge into the work of saving life and prop-

erty. The flames must have been smouldering in the top part of the house for some time, for there was no possibility of checking their progress. So, while the fire-department bent its chief energies toward saving the adjoining buildings, Charlie Carey, with others, did all that lay in their power for the terrified occupants of the burning building. To many, the muscular, active young man, who seemed to be in almost a dozen places at once, helping and comforting, must have seemed like an angel from heaven.

The fire had made such headway that little could be done beyond caring for human life. It appeared to Charlie that he had carried a dozen babies to safety and the open air, tenderly assisted aged and infirm ones down the interminable stairs, as long as the building could be entered with safety. But the old story, which has been told so often that it is commonplace, of a child forgotten in one of the upper chambers until the roof is just ready to fall, was, in God's providence, repeated on this occasion. I should not risk the interest of this chapter to relate a thing so like a thrice-told tale, had it not been the Lord's own way to cut the knot of Charlie Carey's perplexities. The call had come to keep clear from the building, when a

woman's cry, wild and piercing, proclaimed the fact that her baby was asleep in a room on the second floor. Quick as thought, Charlie dashed in, gained the room, caught up the sleeping child, and regained the open air just as the roof went down in a blinding crash.

He threw the baby into the crowd, and made a desperate effort to spring clear, when a falling fragment struck him, and he fell amid the burning ruins.

Strong hands risked much to drag him out, and bear him, all unconscious as he was, to the home he had so lately left. Mrs. Carey, who had sorely tried Cecile by her weeping and lamentations over Charlie's strange notions, was aroused to see him lying like one dead. All blackened by the smoke and flame, and bleeding from his wounds, she could scarcely believe it was indeed her boy. But the necessity for action roused all the mother within her, and after swift messengers had been despatched for Dr. Ellis and Mr. Carey, she went to work with an efficiency that would have not seemed possible to one who had seen her a few moments before. Before the doctor arrived everything that would be needed was in readiness, and she was as calm as a marble statue. But it was the calmness of over-strained nerves, the doctor

knew, and sent her away before the examination that should tell the story whether this was indeed death.

Poor Cecile! She clung to her mother as in a fearful dream. It could not be! Her Charlie! Was it only yesterday they had that long, sweet talk together, when he told her about his life-plans? What if he should die? was already dead? The Lord certainly would not lead him to a path of duty, and then strike him down before he could even enter it!

Charlie had been carried directly to his mother's room. So the two banished, trembling ones crept up to Cecile's room, and there sat shivering and sobbing. Cecile was praying, but in Mrs. Carey's heart there was a feeling as if she had no right to pray, even in this terrible trouble and sorrow. For had she not driven him away from her to his death? She would not listen when he came to her with the story of his conviction of duty. She was being punished as she deserved.

In the room below the father stood watching the doctors, for Dr. Ellis had summoned help as they removed the burnt, torn, and bloody clothing, seeking to find the nature and extent of the injuries. Charlie still lay unconscious, and the only sign of life was the feeble, flut-

tering pulse. This might stop at any moment, so slight seemed his hold on life.

At last the examination was completed, as far as it was possible to carry it at present. The head had received a serious injury, and the burns were numerous and deep. Time alone could tell whether he would ever awake from that death-like stupor.

Morning came, and there was not much change. Dr. Ellis began to hope that if he lived through that day he would recover. But it was impossible to tell, and the thread of hope was slight. The anxiety and suspense were not confined to the Carey home. Charlie had many friends who loved him, and there were offers of help from many sources. But none of them would Dr. Ellis accept, only that of Stephen Hollister.

"I have tried you, young man, and you were not found wanting. This is a case where close watching is needed and upon it may hang the issues of life and death, as far as they are in human hands."

So Stephen deferred his departure from Woodland, and at Mr. Carey's request took up his abode in the house of mourning. They all learned to depend upon him as a tower of strength. It was an inexpressible comfort to

Cecile to have him there, and to feel that Charlie was so cared for when he was in charge of the sick-room.

It was nearly a week before Charlie knew them. He had come out of the stupor only to lapse into the delirium of fever. The brain had received a blow that endangered both reason and life, and the deep and cruel burns added fever to the trouble. Dr. Ellis spent at his bedside every moment he could snatch from other patients, for Charlie was as dear to him as an own son. It was a desperate battle that was fought in that room for the life so precious to them all.

In these days of doubt and fear, when hope scarce dared lift up her head, Mrs. Carey was also fighting a battle. She regarded the calamity that had come upon them as the direct judgment of God upon her. The question arose, "Can you promise to lay your son as an offering at the feet of the Lord, to do with him and send him whither He wills, if his life can be spared?" It was a terrible conflict. She felt that it would be like death to have him leave her and go to the uttermost parts of the earth.

One night the symptoms seemed much more unfavorable. Charlie muttered in his delirium of his promise and his mother's opposition.

"Oh, mother, mother!" he would say, "don't you see how hard you are making it for me? The Saviour calls me one way, and you hold fast on the other. You will pull my heart in two."

Stephen saw the real state of the case, and his soul was filled with a yearning pity for her. Mr. Carey, too, inquired the reason of Charlie's troubled fancies, and for the first time learned of the plans his son had been making for his future.

It was a bitter alternative to him also. But anxiety for his life swallowed up all other thoughts. Dr. Ellis came and went without a word of encouragement. The symptoms were constantly unfavorable for a week. Then there were signs of a change.

"If he rouses, and seems rational," Dr. Ellis told his care-takers, "humor every possible fancy and desire. His life absolutely depends on it."

It so happened that when this moment of first consciousness came Stephen and his mother were the only ones with him. Charlie opened his eyes and looked languidly around, while he seemed endeavoring to collect his ideas. He did not try to speak, but when his eyes rested on his mother's face the past seemed to come

back, and he looked at her with such an expression of love and longing that she could not resist it. So she said quietly, stroking the weak hand that lay passively within hers,

“You shall have your way, Charlie. Only go to sleep and rest.”

The words had somehow seemed forced from her against her will; but now that they were spoken she was conscious of a blessed sense of relief, as of a crushing burden lifted. And she had her reward also in the look that came into Charlie's face, a look as if a great light had suddenly dawned.

Gently the languid eyes closed and he was restfully sleeping. The two watchers scarcely dared to breathe lest they should disturb this life-giving slumber. Only Stephen looked up into Mrs. Carey's face, and his lips formed the heart-felt words, “Thank God!”

She knew the thankfulness had a double cause. And while she realized that her words had committed her to the very thing she had so bitterly fought, yet she felt no regret. Her feelings were a wonder to herself. Where was the opposition, the rebellion, that had so filled her heart and embittered her cup? more than that, which had sent her only boy to meet this terrible suffering? The proud, hard soul was

melted within her. She dared not move, for Charlie's hand still lay in hers, as if it drew strength and comfort from the loving clasp. But in spirit she bowed low before her Lord and Master with a cry for forgiveness. She hardly felt worthy to thank him for the moment of recognition just granted ; for it seemed to her that in justice God must yet take her boy from her. But she solemnly vowed, if this unspeakable blessing was given her, to consecrate herself, body and soul, to the service of her Saviour.

Stephen was no mind-reader, such as we hear of in these days of more than wisdom. Yet he could tell that the passing moments were fraught with momentous decisions. He could only pray in a general way that light and peace might be granted, for one soul may not enter in the Holy of Holies where another is in communion with Jehovah.

This was the beginning of the coming back to life and health for Charlie Carey. For days he was too weak to talk, and passed much of the time in a state of half-slumber. But when he did arouse and come into the world of mortals to take his food and medicine, the loving, grateful look he would give his mother, if she happened to be beside him, showed that he realized

and remembered the promise she had given him. Poor woman! She was filled with conflicting emotions; and these bits of mute language which she perfectly understood, almost broke her heart; and, contradictory as it may seem, were her greatest comfort.

The knowledge that his mother had yielded the point, and would no longer oppose him in following out the clear path of duty, helped greatly in hastening his recovery. His mind was still too weak to reason much, and he only clasped the sweet thought close to his heart, that all was at last right. Possible obstacles in the future did not intrude to trouble him during these misty days of early improvement.

It was not very long before he evinced a desire to talk. Stephen was a wise individual in this regard, and kept him more quiet than it was in the power of any one else to do. This was largely owing to the fact that the bond of sympathy was so close, that Charlie was made to feel that his friend understood what he wanted to express by intuition. A hand-clasp meant so much between these two! And then there was the language of the eye, which can speak volumes when the souls behind are in strict accord.

Stephen's position was rather anomalous in

the household. Filling a place which no hired nurse could fill, yet doing all as a friend, the Careys felt that he was putting them under obligations which could never be repaid. But what words can express the delight it was to him to be so constantly in such close association with Cecile? The hopes he had been permitting only recently to take root grew and expanded daily. And there is no doubt, in the light of later events, that the providence that brought Charlie Carey to the borders of eternity, thus solving his distressing perplexities, was also an agency in bringing to Stephen Hollister the fruition of his life plans and dreams.

And so the summer days crept on, and Charlie slowly crept back to life with them. As power to think returned, the problem which he was trying to solve when knowledge and sense were so suddenly blotted out, demanded its solution. As far as his mother was concerned, the matter was settled. What about the other factors in the problem?

CHAPTER XVII.

AN OPEN PATH.

SUMMER passed, and brought the more bracing air of autumn. Charlie Carey had so far regained his strength as to ride out daily, and occasionally take a short walk, accompanied by his mother. The accident which had so nearly blotted out all earthly things for him of course precluded any return to college for an indefinite period. Cecile, although not her usual self in health and strength, had gone back into school-life, and so Charlie was largely dependent upon his mother for company. The tie between these two hearts had become closer and sweeter than ever before. Mrs. Carey was a very different woman from the one that had been on the verge of weak hysterics on that memorable evening. The discipline which followed had transformed her from a narrow self-seeking, nominal Christian to an humble, prayerful servant of her Master, walking softly lest she should make any more well-nigh fatal slips.

Strange as it may seem, one of her greatest

joys was in talking over with Charlie the plans for his future life in foreign service. She had at first accepted the situation from dire necessity; then, as the blessing of submission brought its natural fruits, the very bitterness of the sacrifice turned to sweetness. She learned to look at the matter so differently and from such a changed standpoint, that what at first seemed like a robbery of a mother's most sacred rights grew to be a precious privilege. What an honor to have a son to give to such a holy work! Why, it was a mission of mercy that even the angels might be envious to share!

You see that it took a terrible sorrow and an eye-wash of bitter tears to clear her vision so that she could see through the telescope the needs of perishing souls in those far-off lands. But when once her vision was clarified, there was no further need for urging her to look through the glass. Her whole soul went out in longing pity, and if she had not had a substitute to send in the person of her only son, I think she would have almost wished that she were young once more, that she might have entered heart and soul into the work herself. Charley found her a most delightful companion, for she was always ready to listen to his plans and hopes, suggesting, and helping out his ideas.

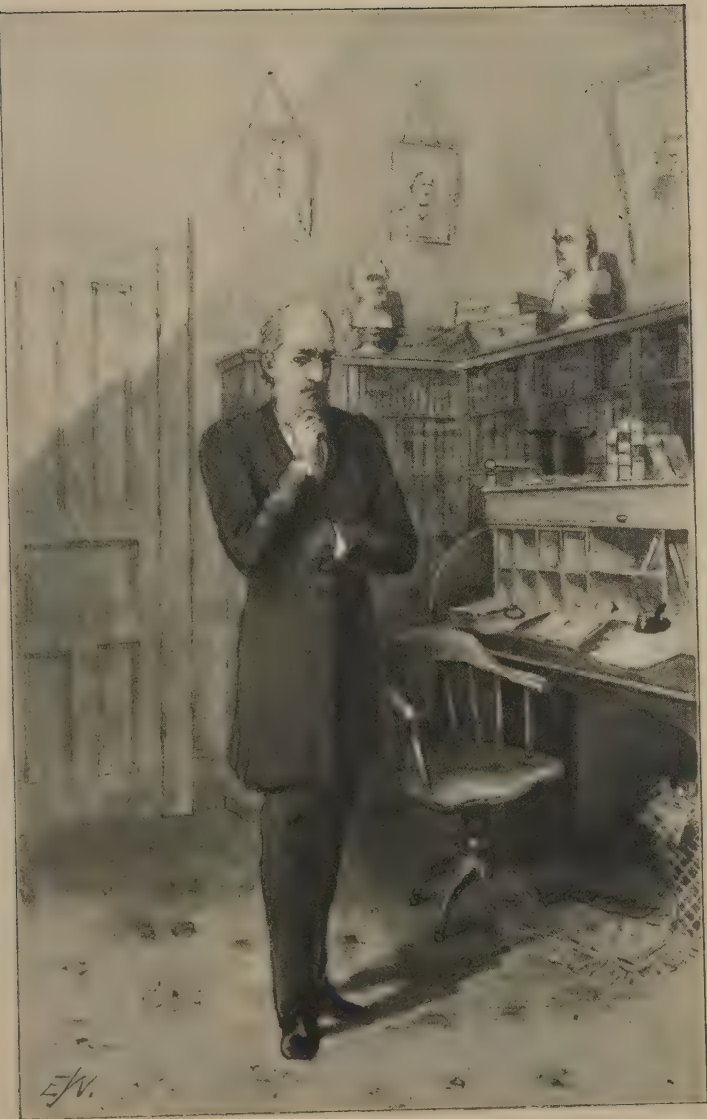
And what about the father? Has he consented to this sacrifice? For you must remember he was not a Christian at all, and therefore could not be expected to view the matter from any such standpoint. Perhaps you have been waiting to hear that this sorrow and soul-harrowing anxiety about Charley had brought him to the only true source of comfort. I wish I could say that this was the case. But alas, sorrow does not always drive human souls to Christ for refuge. An earthquake shock may shake the very foundations of life, but even though earthly props may be tumbling in ruin, a hard, rebellious heart may yet turn away from the firm refuge offered at the cross of Calvary. Mrs. Carey had undertaken to talk to him about the matter in the early days of Charlie's convalescence. As she could not appeal to any Christian principle, she could only state the case as an unalterable conviction of duty on the part of his son, and suggest that to oppose him in it would not only retard his recovery but make it very possible to prevent recovery at all. Dr. Ellis, also, told Mr. Carey that the only hope of speedy return to health lay in rendering his mind, as far as possible, free from any anxiety or trouble.

"You have it in your power to give him a

tonic far ahead of anything in my line," he said to him one day in a call at his office, whither he had gone to say this very thing. "His mind is fully made up as to his future work, and he is worrying over your expected disapproval. Your opposition cannot change his conviction of duty, and may prove a very expensive thing, if it does not take him out of the world altogether. Pardon my plain speaking, Mr. Carey, but I fear you will have to take your choice between a son doing good in his chosen profession on the other side of the globe, and a grave where lie buried all your hopes centred in the boy."

So saying, Dr. Ellis left him, without giving him any chance for reply. Can you imagine the conflict that raged in the heart of that proud, self-willed man? If so, I am sure you pity him. Never, in all his life, had he been compelled to submit his will in any important matter. An indulged and petted only child, he had grown up to manhood and had assumed its responsibilities without ever having been brought face to face with any issue that he could not manage in his own way.

His children, even, had not known the strength of his self-will. Things had gone so smoothly that nothing had showed them its power. And now it was all the harder because there was no



chance to fight the inevitable conclusion. He felt as if he had come in contact with a granite wall, against which it was in vain to beat his head in rebellion. He could not argue the case with Charlie, even in the kindest manner, for that would only agitate in a dangerous, perhaps fatal, way. But what possessed the boy to go off at such a crazy tangent? Fool, to throw away all his chances at home, for a visionary dream of duty!

Imagine, if you can, this man pacing the floor of his office like a caged lion. He locked the door that no one might come in, and then gave full vent to the storm raging within. Poor man! so utterly alone in this time of anguish! His wife had gone over to the enemy, and could not sympathize with him in his blasted hope. His absolute helplessness almost maddened him. There was nothing in all the world he could do to change the facts; he must accept them, for of course he could not be the murderer of his only boy.

It was early afternoon when the doctor called; it was early evening when Mr. Carey went home, looking ten years older than when he departed at dinner-time. He made a pretence of eating; and after the meal was over asked his wife to come with him to their room. What

passed between them can only be surmised. It may well be imagined that it was not a pleasant interview for Charlie's mother. But she gathered from it all that his father would not withhold his consent to his proposed disposal of his future. "Since it must be this or nothing," he had said, "he will have to go his own way, I suppose."

Usually he had gone in for a little while to see Charlie before going again to his office. But on this evening he commissioned his wife to bear the message of his consent, as he wished to obtain better control of himself before seeing the boy.

It was well for Charlie's peace of mind and welfare of body that he knew nothing of the scenes that had transpired that afternoon. Neither did his mother tell him of his father's bitter words. She trusted that God would bring him to a better state of feeling, and that the changed future might yet have his approval, if not his blessing.

Dr. Ellis had proved himself a true prophet. The knowledge that now no obstacles would be placed in his way by those who had the best right to dictate his course was an invigorating tonic. He grew better so fast as to astonish the doctor, so great an influence does the mind exert upon the body.

Stephen Hollister had gone away to his study at one of the great law-schools early in September. He took with him the warmest regard of every one in the Carey household, albeit Mr. Carey felt a little tinge of bitterness, thinking that it was Charlie's intimacy with such fanatical people as Stephen, Cecile, and even Dr. Ellis, that had led him into the decision so fatal to the ambitious hopes that had been cherished for him. But he had a high regard for the young man who had been such a strong, faithful helper in the time of their terrible anxiety.

We have spoken of the close association this experience had given him with Cecile. She had found it a revelation of the depth and sweetness of his character. No one could be with Stephen Hollister in these later days of development and not be impressed with a sense of power and absolute truth. He was sincerity and honor itself. And when we look at the way in which the Lord had led him all through his life—not to develop in abnormal directions, but straight toward the light—we cannot wonder at his stalwart manliness.

And Stephen? You know how long he had looked up to Cecile as far beyond his reach. True, she did not seem so far above him now, since he had grown nearer her own fair height.

The possibility had been growing more and more real ever since their close association in Christian Endeavor work, and the scanning of distant fields through the telescopes of missionary study. And the accident to Charlie had been a blessed opportunity to him of ministering to her he so loved in secret thought. But he felt that the time for revealing his inmost heart had not yet come. So he went away and made no sign, save to ask her to write to him occasional letters. This boon was readily granted, for she felt too grateful to him for Charlie's sake to deny him any reasonable request. It was not an unpleasant task to which she had pledged herself, for his letters, she was sure, would be strong and helpful, just like himself.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS.

FRED ELLIS had been among the converts in the revival season of the previous winter. This meant a great deal to such an intense, impulsive boy as he was, and lifted a load of anxiety from the hearts of his home friends. In speaking of his experience he always referred his first serious impressions back to the mission band and the lessons learned there. In fact a large number of the members of both bands had come into the church at the time of the special meetings, and had been formed into a Junior Society of Christian Endeavor.

This change of organization broadened the work of these boys and girls, but they still continued to make mission-work a distinctive feature. It was, you know, the form of Christian Endeavor with which they had first become familiar, and in most cases had been the direct means of their conversion. No wonder that they loved it so much and made it the nucleus of all their other endeavors. Indeed, as Katie laughingly remarked to Ruth one day,

“Isn’t it queer, Ruthie dear, how we have to work backward with these blessed youngsters? They have started out with the telescopic eyes, and we have to teach them that they must use the microscope too. It is ever so much easier for them to see foreign needs than what is right around them at home.”

Ruth smiled. “But we want them to have proportionate vision, Katie, and so we must now insist more on home work, I think. No danger of their neglecting the other. It is truly a reversed process to the one we older ones had to undergo.”

There was indeed no danger, as Ruth had said, of any forgetfulness of the responsibility the bands had assumed of the support of their respective charges in Burmah and China. Neither had they become weary of collecting the fragments. It had grown into a settled habit; and every scrap of paper, every bit of cloth, was carefully scanned with a view to its possibilities, before being consigned to destruction. In fact the whole church had joined the fragment-saving fraternity. It was no longer a new departure, but promised to be a fixed and lifelong habit with every one of these wide-awake Christians in Woodland Park Church. The fragments sometimes assumed large pro-

portions; and no one was any the poorer for this care over the Lord's baskets.

One occurrence of great interest about this time was the receiving by the girls' band of a letter from Mrs. Ingalls herself. You will remember that they had some time before assumed the support of a girl in the Thongzai school; and the twenty-five dollars this required yearly was gladly and easily raised, for their hearts were thoroughly in the work. Mrs. Seymour had written Mrs. Ingalls, asking to have a girl assigned as their particular charge, and this letter was in regard to the little Maria, the child of their adoption.

“DEAR LITTLE HELPERS OF WOODLAND PARK CHURCH:

“For a long time I have been trying to find time to write to you, but the life of a missionary is so full of every day ‘must-be’s,’ that the correspondence gets crowded out very often. First, I want to tell you something about our Thongzai school. Rather, I should say schools; for there are three in connection with the station, under our general superintendence of course, but directly under the care of native teachers. If you only knew the help and comfort the pictures and cards you send are to us!

It lightens our labors in many ways I have not time to tell you about.

“Shall I give you an account of a Sabbath-school concert we had last Sunday? I wish you could have the picture just as it looked. The faces of the children were all dusky faces, and the little bamboo chapel would have seemed quaint and Oriental in your eyes. Remember, these children could never have known about Jesus and his love had not the Christians in far-off America sent the missionaries here to tell them.

“Would you like the program in full? Here it is for you:

1. Music; by the school.
2. Reading of the roll, and classes seated.
3. Prayer.
4. All who can repeat the life of Christ in Scripture language stand in evidence, and then one from each class repeat.
5. Questions to all of these classes by the native pastor.
6. Repeat historical Scripture texts. All arise and repeat the Ten Commandments.
7. Questions on the Bible pictures hung on the chapel walls.
8. History of the creation; by the first infant

class. History down to Cain and Abel, by the second class.

9. Questions on the pictures.

10. History of the flood, and life of Noah. Questions on the pictures.

11. Land of Palestine, and questions on the map of Asia.

12. Infant class repeat the work of the six days' creation, and the Sabbath rest.

13. Reading the report of the collections, by the clerk.

14. Report by the superintendent; attendance, 117, classes, 7.

15. Music.

16. Presents; reward cards from Woodland Park Helpers.

17. A call for music from Miss Evans from the congregation, and a "Thank you" in English from one of the native preachers.

18. Singing by the school.

19. Benediction.

"Then came the looking at the beautiful cards, and a great gathering about the organ by those who had never heard it. I thought of you many times that afternoon, for you were well represented. Some of the wall-pictures were your gift; the lovely rewards spoke of your interest;

while Maria's sweet voice, as she stood by the organ and led the singing of the school, made me wish you could see what an instrument for good your money was, training for future service for Christ.

"I have tried to give you this picture of an actual scene in this heathen land, that it might make things real to you. Imagine you are just peeping through glass-doors into our life and work here. But I must go on and tell you what a comfort and help your girl is to us. She is studying well, and shows a really humble, Christian spirit. She is more of a dependence than any other of the girls, because she is so willing and anxious to be of service. I will try and have her write you a letter herself before long. We all love her dearly.

"The picture-books you sent us nearly a year ago are a treasure-house of amusement and entertainment. The scholars come up to visit me, and I give them the books to look at when I am too busy to attend to them at once. They never tire of the pictures; and I like to see them myself, they bring up home scenes so vividly. If you could send us some Bible pictures, arranged in groups, or by subjects, it would meet one of our present needs.

"But oh, dear children of the Woodland Park

Band, if you could see some of the sin and sorrow we meet daily, you would not wonder that our hearts grow sick and our heads weary in trying to point out the Great Healer. I was glad to hear that so many of you have recently learned how to pray. Do not forget to pray for us and our work.

“Your friend,

“MARILLA INGALLS.”

The children listened to the reading of this letter with breathless interest; and at its conclusion one little girl said excitedly,

“Why, Miss Ruth, it is just like a real peep through a telescope, isn’t it?”

“Yes, indeed,” Ruth replied, “and I am very glad that Mrs. Ingalls gave us such a graphic account of that Sunday-school concert. We can almost see the scene.”

“I wonder,” said Lucy Gray, “how many children here in America could go through such a questioning about the Bible without a good deal of previous study? I think they were pretty well posted.”

“It certainly shows what faithful work our missionaries are doing,” said Ruth. “Now we must be on the lookout for the Bible pictures Mrs. Ingalls has asked for. Isn’t it encourag-

ing to hear that the pictures and cards we have sent have done so much good?"

"Yes, indeed!" said Edie Ingersoll. "I am afraid we are getting a little slack, for the things of that kind don't come in as fast as they did at first."

"I don't think that there is any falling off of interest, Edie dear," responded Ruth. "You must remember that our great quantity at first came from long-gathered hoards. Since these have become exhausted, the supply must come from daily gatherings."

The boys were quite envious of the girls for a time, because they had been favored with a letter direct from the field of operations. But Katie and Cecile exhorted them to patience, telling them that their turn would surely come, as letters had been sent to the missionary superintending the school where their boy was being trained. It had been very gratifying to those in charge of this Band work, to see the earnestness and inventiveness of the boys in their efforts to raise their needed twenty-five dollars for the support of their representative. Gardening operations were much in favor still for the summer months. Four of the boys entered into partnership, rented an acre of ground, raised potatoes thereon, conducting the whole mat-

ter upon strictly business principles, and netted a goodly amount to send to China. It was harder to earn money during the winter, but under the pressure of necessity scroll-saws and turning lathes came to the front, and many of the boys became really expert in the manufacture of pretty and useful articles. A plan was on foot for the winter, just at hand in this period of our story, for a joint enterprise between the boys and girls. It was nothing more nor less than a fair, for which the girls should prepare the hundred and one articles of fancy-work that somehow always find ready sale, beside things in the utility department, such as aprons, quilts, and the like. The boys were to exhibit the results of their skill in the use of tools, and fret-work. They could really make a great many very salable articles; and both bands were eager to prove their ability in the direction of success.

They were to hold their fair a little while before the holidays, that people might avail themselves of this opportunity of purchasing Christmas gifts. It was while they were all employing every spare moment toward the accomplishment of their design, that the long-looked-for letter from China came to the boys. They hailed it with delight, as tangible proof that their work

really amounted to something after all. They enjoyed it so much, and it gives such a vivid picture of life in China, that I must allow a few extracts. It is too long to give entire.

“The boys’ school-building stands on the side of a bank, which has been cut away just enough to allow space for its foundations. It faces the south, is about ninety feet long and twenty-eight feet wide, making a rather long building, as you see. It is divided into five nearly equal parts. The front room is the school-room, where are bright red seats and desks for twenty-eight or thirty boys, and a large red wooden chair and small table for the teacher, above whose head a foreign clock tells the time of day in its own easy fashion, and is understood without referring to the Chinese eight tones. The room has no blackboard or apparatus of any kind. This seems strange to you, but if you enter the door you will hear all the boys reading at the top of their voices, the work of the teacher being to correct them if they read wrong. His ear is so trained that he can tell whether they are correct. This is the Chinese idea of study, and we have found it best to adopt it in our Christian schools, as they would find it difficult to adapt themselves to any other method.

“This is a boarding-school, and the next two rooms are of the same size and furnished exactly alike—four beds on each side the front and back doors, making sixteen beds in both rooms. These look strange enough with their simple mats and blue comforters, partially hidden by the blue mosquito nettings that fall from the bamboo poles surmounting the four corners of the rude bedstead and are tucked snugly down beneath the matting. Each is accompanied by a small red cupboard, in which the boys count their personal property and notions safe.

The fourth room is the dining-room. Like every other room, it has a door in each side and a window at each end. The furniture consists of a large red cupboard in each corner, two long red benches, two long unpainted tables, and a number of unpainted stools. Back of the dining-room is a hall, on the right side of which is the cook-room; on the left is the coal-room and a room for the sick.

“The school hours do not vary so much from yours in America. The boys study from 9 to 11:30 A.M., and from 1 until 4 P.M. You will be interested in watching the dinner operations. One lad comes in and places upon the table an earthen crock with a cover and a handle, the steam pouring from the crevice. Then he takes

from the square compartment under the table his rice-bowl and chop-sticks, and a little saucer with some shrimps upon it. Filling the bowl three times full during the meal, and taking enough shrimps for a relish with his rice, he eats, and then gathers up his things, goes to the kitchen, washes and replaces his dishes, and is off. Meantime others come, each on the same independent scale. Some have salt fish, some salted vegetables, which they slice upon boards, and some have a second bowl with a salt liquid into which they dip fish or fresh green salad. The smallest boy in the school, who is eleven years old, but looks as if he might be five, comes in great glee bringing a live young frog which he has just caught and is holding by its leg. Ask him what he intends to do with it. 'Eat it!' he says with immense gusto, his mouth evidently watering for the precious morsel. So they come and go.

"Dinner over, they all play until the bell calls them. They study only the Scriptures as their reading book, and they seem to understand what they read.

"These Chinese boys are very fond of medicine. There is seldom a day that some little fellow does not want a dose of some kind. The most popular is 'Davis' Pain-Killer,' which the

Chinese like very much and call the 'red medicine.' Quinine is equally popular, and is called 'white medicine.' Castor oil they take with as much relish as children at home take maple-syrup."

The missionary went on to say that the name of their adopted boy was San Pau. As he was an orphan, and there were no relatives to claim him, he was entirely under the charge the mission. He was a waif from a great famine devastation, and the only one spared out of a large family.

"He is a bright boy," the letter ran, "and we have great hopes of his future usefulness. Although he is not yet a Christian, we have faith to believe that before long he will accept the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour."

The boys were wonderfully interested in this account of their protégé, and were more enthusiastic than ever in their efforts to raise the money needed for his support.

Perhaps you are waiting to hear the result of their fair enterprise. It involved no little labor on the part of our boys and girls, but they persevered bravely, with the help and suggestions of older workers. The fair was held in a pleasant little hall over one of the stores on Main Street. One week before Christmas was the

time appointed, and by dint of earnest work on the part of all concerned and some of their friends, everything was in readiness. It had been hard to do so much when school had its many demands, but really the gathered results of their labor did great credit to all the children.

Besides the articles on sale, there was an ante-room where refreshments were served—the mothers and sisters of the Band workers having contributed the necessary cakes, meats, etc., with their accompaniments. Quite an amount was realized from this source alone. The articles sold well and were nearly all disposed of at good prices; and at the close of the evening bare tables and an encouragingly well-filled money box rewarded the efforts of these young workers. After deducting all expenses, they found themselves in possession of a fund which would not only meet the expenses of their charges in Burmah and China, but was ample to help the cause in other directions. It was voted to lay aside a portion for an expense fund for the scattering of their collected fragments; the remainder, after taking out the fifty dollars for their work abroad, was to be used by the Junior Society of Christian Endeavor for needs at home.

It was an experience they never forgot; and the fact that they had proved their ability to raise money for the Lord's work gave them confidence in many praiseworthy directions. Can you look forward, and see what a noble band of workers was coming up to take the places of the present burden-bearers? Mr. Seymour rejoiced over their success with great joy; not for just the present pleasure and power it gave, but for its influence on the lives of these lambs of the flock. He felt that if they could be kept up to their present plane of thinking and endeavor, the Woodland Park Church of the future would have no cause for fear.

There was one thing that was causing great anxiety in the hearts of loving friends: Mrs. Seymour's health was gradually failing. Never very strong, she had let her zeal outrun her strength. Consumption was hereditary in her family; and although there had never been any sign of danger in her case until after her residence in Woodland, a cough was proving more and more troublesome and debilitating, and other grave symptoms were appearing. Many earnest prayers ascended in her behalf, for she was tenderly loved.

Dr. Ellis did everything in his power. At his suggestion she had gone away in September, to

spend the winter with friends in a more southerly latitude. He hoped that the disease was not too deeply seated for the change to prove efficacious. But all the reports that came to the loving hearts in Woodland were unfavorable. A steady loss of strength and the obstinate cough told the story of unchecked disease. The physician's orders became imperative, that she must be taken to Florida without delay. Mr. Seymour tendered his resignation to the church, but they refused to accept it, and granted him an unlimited vacation with continuance of salary. So, shortly after the beginning of the New Year, Pastor Seymour sadly bade farewell to his sorrowing flock and turned his face toward his beloved wife. He took her to the sunny glades and piney odors of fair Florida, followed by the prayers and tears of many faithful souls.

CHAPTER XIX.

LUCY GRAY'S DECISION.

It was a time of great sadness and sorrow among Woodland Park Church people. Their pastor was absent for an indefinite period, with the possibility of sore bereavement before him. In view of it all there was much reason for depression. But the Lord's ear was not deaf to the cries of his children, neither was his arm shortened that it could not bring deliverance.

They engaged as supply during the winter a young man from a neighboring theological seminary. Henry Applegate was just the man to suit at this juncture. He was a prospective foreign missionary, and consequently found a congenial atmosphere in this church of missionary workers. To Charlie Carey especially was he a help and comfort. Charlie was in that trying transition time between weakness and strength, that follows every severe prostration of the vital energies. Much exertion of mind or body was as yet a dangerous experiment. And time had grown so precious.

It was hard to remain inactive while the preparation for his life-work lay yet before him. He did not realize that the very discipline through which he had been passing was the best thing in the world to fit him for quiet endurance, and to give him the staying qualities so indispensable to a missionary. This learning to wait God's time was a lesson which he would sorely need on the foreign field. An impatient missionary! Can you imagine such a thing? Look at Judson, waiting seven long weary years for the first convert!

Study was as yet absolutely forbidden to Charlie, and the time often hung wearily on his hands. He could take walks in moderation, and about the time Henry Applegate began his ministrations in Woodland, Dr. Ellis gave him permission to attend church for one service on Sunday. It so happened that the young preacher was invited to Dr. Ellis's for dinner on that first Sabbath, and Charlie was invited also.

It was no uncommon thing for Charlie to dine at 43 Floral Avenue on Sunday, because the doctor was sure to be at home on that day if possible, and he loved the young man with a deep affection. He was in danger of becoming morbid under his enforced idleness, and his friend and physician wished to give him all the

help which an occasional change of scene could render.

Henry Applegate was struck at once by the tall youth, bearing so plainly the traces of recent and severe illness. The injuries had left one or two permanent scars, and his whole bearing suggested debility. He was impressed, also, by the evident affection with which he was regarded by all the family, from boyish Fred to the doctor himself. Ruth seemed to look upon him as a privileged brother. As he watched him closely, there was something that gave him the idea that here was a congenial spirit; for every word, and even his air of deep interest when Christian work was the topic under discussion, showed where his heart was enlisted.

After dinner they adjourned to the library for a season of talk. Charlie was ordered to lie down upon the easy couch, and Mrs. Ellis, in a motherly way, threw a bright-colored afghan over him.

"You all spoil me," he said, a little wistfully. It was easy to see that the rôle of invalid had become somewhat galling; that he longed for manly strength once more, that he might show what was in him and burning for demonstration.

"You will bear a little spoiling," said the

doctor, with just a shade of tenderness in his voice. It was eloquent testimony to the love this young man had won. Henry Applegate became curious to learn something of his past history.

He had not long to wait. Presently Dr. Ellis announced that he must take a short drive into the country to see a patient. "I often wish," said he, "that people could choose another time to be sick, and leave me my Sundays. But if one elects to become a physician of either souls or bodies, he must hold himself in readiness to administer aid when it is needed."

They were speedily on their way. A favorable opportunity came in which Henry Applegate asked for the information he had become so anxious to gain. He found that he had started the usually taciturn doctor upon a favorite topic, and was soon in possession of Charlie's story. The telling of it involved so many things, that the young minister was enlightened regarding several points of interest pertaining to Christ's cause in Woodland. It brought out the story of the missionary departure among the young people, its ultimate developments, and finally, the history of Charlie's consecration to the work abroad.

Henry Applegate was thrilled to his very

soul. This young man, pledged to the same life-work and possessing the same aims would be a brother indeed. That he had the stuff in him of which heroes are made was evident from his bravery at the time of the fire, when he so risked his life. You may be sure the story lost none of its force in the telling, for Dr. Ellis was enthusiastic over the tale.

It must have been that the occult connection between mind and mind, of which we sometimes read in these days of wisdom, caused Charlie to long for a more intimate acquaintance with the young stranger. In some ways he reminded him of Stephen Hollister, only this man had perhaps more of that intangible polish which wide association with people of culture will often give. Not that there was any unfavorable comparison by which Stephen would suffer. No indeed! For the souls of Stephen and Charlie were knit together, like the souls of David and Jonathan in the old Bible times.

The next Sabbath was cold and stormy, so that Charlie could not venture out to church. But with the permission of his father, Henry Applegate had received an invitation to stop with the Careys during this two days' stay in Woodland. Accordingly there was the pleasure of his company, even if denied the other

pleasure of listening to his pulpit ministrations.

There was opportunity for a number of hours of delightful communion. It was sweet to Charlie to thus talk with one whose plans so nearly coincided with his own. To be sure, a medical missionary would have a somewhat different line of work from a preaching missionary. But Henry laughingly assured him that he would have to preach as well as practice, when once he found himself among the heathen. This was a new view to Charlie, and gave him food for serious thought. It was evident, after Monday morning had come and taken his friend away to the duties of the week, that the invalid was better for the association. This was the beginning of a life-long friendship, lasting even when the two were laboring in widely separated fields on the other side of the sea.

The occasional letters from Mr. Seymour were read at the weekly prayer-meetings by Dr. Ellis or his substitute. The earlier ones told of marked improvement, and thankful hearts praised God for his goodness. There were always messages for the flock in these letters, and they were looked for eagerly, and many return messages of love did the mails bear southward.

Happy pastor, that holds such a place in the hearts of his people!

Lucy Gray was also brought to face grave questionings these same winter days. For many months a still small voice had been whispering in her heart, "You can give little to the work. Why not tell the Lord, 'Here am I, send me?'" The idea was not altogether unpleasant. But she was bowed down by a haunting sense of unworthiness. Her view of the work was such as to make it seem utterly beyond her. Still the voice kept whispering its message, until one day, as she was at work in her room putting it in order, the thought came, "Perhaps it is the call of the Lord himself."

But we will let her tell the story, as it appeared in a letter written to her sister Helen, married and living in another State.

"MY DEAR HELEN:

"Perhaps you will be surprised at receiving a letter from me when you are the debtor, not I. And perhaps you will be still more surprised before you have finished reading it. You cannot be more surprised than I am myself, at the turn things have taken. You used to be my confidant, you know, before that big brother-in-law of mine carried you away. I am by no means sure I have forgiven him yet.

“ You will remember that I have told you from time to time of the progress of matters in our Christian Endeavor Society, of which you used to be such an active member. The story of the missionary departure I wrote you in detail. Yet I am sure any words of mine were too feeble to express all it has meant to us. In my last I think I told you of Charlie’s dreadful injuries, nearly taking him out of the world just as he had brought some woman’s baby out of that burning tenement house on Taylor street. Well, it came out afterward that he had only the night before pledged himself to the foreign mission work. His mother had refused her consent, but he was so near death that I believe she promised God that if he would let him live, she would oppose him no longer. Charlie is nearly well; that is, he is improving as fast as possible, and you can’t imagine the change in Mrs. Carey! It is like a new conversion. His father has given up too, I hear, but hardly know just how it was brought about, for he is not a Christian, you know. It must have been the Lord. But all this was not what I started out to tell you. In fact, I hardly know how to get at this part of my story, for it concerns myself.

“ Helen, can you dream of any possibility that would make your sister Lucy worthy of a call

to the work abroad? Yet it has come. For a long time I have had a conviction growing that I was needed there. But I have continually put it aside, on the plea of unworthiness for such a high and holy calling. Yet I could not shake it off. I did not realize that I was trying to stifle the Spirit, until it came to me in a sudden revelation. I can never forget the exact time and place if I live to be an old woman. I had just swept my room, and was dusting most vigorously, for it was Saturday morning, when the little clock on the mantel struck nine. It was the very clock, dear, you gave me last Christmas. Suddenly the mist that had the way of duty obscure passed away, and I seemed to hear an inward voice say, 'Lucy Gray, it is the Lord's call!'

"Well, duster in hand, I sat down to think. The very foundations of my life seemed shaken. I was not conscious of any unwillingness to go, if only I was worthy. All the circumstances of my life passed before me. I reflected on the fact that dear father can only give his large family of girls an education, and with this equipment we must each make our own way in the world. You chose matrimony; as you know, I have always expected to teach.

"When I came to this point in my thinking,

the voice again suggested, gently, 'Why could you not teach there as well as here?' The common sense of the idea rebuked me. The upshot of the whole matter was that I knelt down, sweeping cap on my head and the duster still in my hand, and said,

"Dear Lord, if thou canst make any use of me over there, I am ready to accept thy call.'

"That was all there was of it, and I arose, finished my dusting, for even an embryo foreign missionary has duties in the way of neatness, and went down-stairs to talk it all over with mother. She was as good as gold, of course; she always is. Yet I think it was something of a shock, after all. She asked for time to reflect upon the matter, and I am sure she went in a few minutes to her room to talk it over with the Lord. That is her way, you know.

"All this happened last Saturday, and now it is Wednesday. That very evening, after I had gone to bed she came in, and sitting beside me began to ask questions. I told her the whole story, and presently she said,

"Well, Lucy, I have been wishing lately that I had earthly treasures, so that I could give as my heart prompts to foreign missions. I even asked the Lord to show me some way in which I might contribute to the cause. But I did not

think that the answer would be this, my daughter.'

"Her voice broke a little here, and I was softly crying under my hand. Soon she went on, dear, brave mother that she is:

"'I ought to be very thankful that he has given me such a precious treasure to lay upon his altar. I think I am; at least I seek to be. Go, darling, with your mother's best blessing. May He keep you in the path you have chosen!'

"Do you wonder that I was crying like a babe by this time? It was the first that I realized what it would be to leave her and all the dear ones. She was more composed than I was, and soothed and comforted me as she used to do in the long ago childhood times.

"One thing yet remained—to get father's approval of my choice. Dear patient man! It seems to me, as I look back, that he has not had time or chance for anything but patient endurance. Such a constant struggle to keep so many mouths filled and bodies clothed, to say nothing of mind and soul needs! I felt almost guilty, for I might lighten his burdens if I should stay near by. I should so love to give him a long restful vacation; to give him time for one hearty care-free laugh! But you know that

conscience has always been his ruling guide. Mother had told him about the matter, so he was more ready to give me an answer than she was when I spoke to her about giving me up. How sweet and gentle he was! Not a word of disappointed hopes or personal sacrifice! He accepted this as he accepts everything—as from the Lord. He laid his hand softly on my head, and the touch seemed like a benediction. It was a ‘Mizpah’ blessing, Helen. I never can forget it, never.

“So you see my future seems settled. I must finish my course in the Seminary, which will take two years more. I shall offer myself to the Board very soon, and shall spend my vacations in such special lines of reading and study as they may appoint. If they accept me, I want to be ready for service very soon after my graduation.

“Dear Mrs. Seymour! How I wish she was here to advise me! You don’t know how much we all miss her. The last reports were more favorable. God grant she may yet be spared to us!

“Quoting Paul, ‘You see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.’ Please answer very soon, and give me your sisterly blessing on my chosen path. Remember

you have now two letters to answer instead of one.

“Your loving sister,

“LUCY GRAY.”

It was not long before the quartette knew of Lucy's decision. They met the next Saturday after the mission-band meeting, to talk it all over. Katie had her own secret of consecration to the same work, which she was not yet at liberty to reveal. Charlie's hopes were known to them all; and Cecile felt as if the far-off fields were drawing very near to her, in the prospect of having a brother and dear friend at work amid their whitening harvests.

Katie felt as if she could hardly refrain from declaring her identity with the blessed work.

She gave Lucy a great hug and embrace, which meant all she could not say.

“You blessed girl!” she exclaimed. “To think that you should be the first one to break up our quartette! But never mind; it will be ‘we four, and no more,’ then, as now.”

And so the talk went on. I think a ministering angel might have paused in his flight to listen as these girlish hearts looked forward, striving with earnest gaze to pierce the mysterious future which seemed to enwrap them so close in its misty folds. What would it bring them?

Separation, surely; at the best, work in widely parted fields. One thing would have rejoiced a guardian angel's heart—that the inspiring thought of each was, to give, as long as life should last, the best service possible to the Master whose they had promised to be. Nothing less than this would have suited the high ideal they had adopted for themselves.

Ah, young, faithful, loving hearts! Shadow must be mingled with the sunshine; thorns must grow along with the roses; the cross must precede the crown. Earth's partings are bitter; but heaven's meeting-time will be all the sweeter for the tears. When life's hues lose their rose-color, as lose it they must, the gray will be glorified into the silver lining of the sorrow-clouds. "All things," said Paul, "work together for good to them who love God." In this assurance every Christian heart can rest satisfied and at peace.

It was well that they could not look forward very far into the future. Dark shadows are already dimly gathering in the horizon to overshadow one of these young hearts, so aglow with hope. How well the rest remembered in that sad after-time these words of Ruth,

"I feel almost to envy Lucy her settled plans. For myself, I have no idea as yet what the Lord

has for me to do. At present, little every-day duties seem to be portioned out. Mother leans on me, and my place is by her side. I am content to wait for further developments. But I shall be just as proud of you all, when you are doing great things in the world, as if I was working shoulder to shoulder with you and doing the wonders I shall expect of you."

She had not very long to wait for the finger of God's providence. It may be that her lot implied more of real self-sacrifice than that of the others. Be that as it may, we rejoice in the fact that Divine strength is sufficient for all needs.

CHAPTER XX.

THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

IF I could have my way, this book should have no sad chapters. Of our own choice, no shadows would ever dim the sunshine of our lives. But it is well for us that a higher hand has the appointing of our ways, else they would lead far astray.

For some time the reports from the sunny South were most encouraging. The beloved invalid seemed to drink in new life amid the odors of balsam and pine. Mr. Seymour's letters were jubilant with hope. But a truant cold wave, wandering astray from its northern destination, touched the orange groves and tropical vegetation of Florida and blackened their greenness and beauty. The land looked desolate. The chill breath also had a sadder mission. Mrs. Seymour took a sudden cold from the unexpected change, and the old symptoms returned with renewed force. It is useless to prolong the story. One day, about a week after the cold had been taken, sudden

hemorrhage was brought on by a fit of severe coughing, and before medical aid could be summoned, the pure spirit had gone home to the Saviour she so loved.

There is no need to picture the grief and desolation of the stricken husband. He had never given up hope of her ultimate recovery. The blow was therefore all the more terrible in its suddenness.

He brought the dear body North, and laid it beside her parents in the old family lot near her childhood's home. Close by was the grave of their only child, who had died in infancy years before.

When the last sad offices had been paid, and the mound covering her dust was all that remained to him except the priceless memory of her life, the question came up for answer, "What next?" The letters breathing grief and tenderest sympathy from the Woodland Park flock had been almost more than he could bear. He could not yet look into their faces with the memory of this sorrow so fresh in the minds of them all. He again sent in his resignation, feeling that it was not right to leave them so long without the leadership of a pastor.

He never again tried to sever this relation. In reply, they utterly refused to accept his pro-

posal. "Rest and travel, dear pastor," they said through Dr. Ellis, "till you feel like coming home to us all. We desire no other shepherd while you live."

So he went abroad for a season, and from time to time word came from him in Europe, as he visited the famous localities on the other side of the Atlantic. With the absolute change, his mind recovered its tone, and he could look beyond the grave and see his beloved in the paradise of God.

The furniture and belongings in the parsonage at Woodland were faithfully cared for. At last, in the early part of the next September, word came that he was homeward bound. "My place is with my dear flock," he wrote. "My sister will come and take charge of the house, and make it a home once more. My only desire now is to do the will of the Lord faithfully, till he shall call me home to join the dear departed who are on the other side. I have grown to feel that there is a very thin veil separating the two worlds. Death is only a passing over, so slight that God's children need have no fear of dread. I am happy, dear friends, with a happiness I never knew in the olden days. Eternal things seem so real, so certain. It is the matters pertaining to this shadowed place we call

earth, that are uncertain. Only we may be sure of this, that with God there is nothing uncertain or untrue."

It was easy to see that he had been lifted by a sanctified sorrow to a plane of thought and experience rarely reached by mortal beings. . Not that it is unattainable save by the favored few, but too many sit down in the valley of the shadow, never lifting up their eyes to see the glory waiting to be revealed.

After Mr. Seymour's return it was noticed that there was a new tenderness in his manner, a subtle atmosphere of sympathy that permeated his relations with every one. His sister was quite unlike him, and it was at first painful to see her mistress in the home where the dear departed had once reigned. But she had a winning way of her own; and while it was evident that she could not fill Mrs. Seymour's place, she was soon greatly loved for her own sake.

Ruth, in particular, shrank from calling upon Miss Seymour. She delayed it as long as she could, and at last started out desperately one bright afternoon, thinking it had best be over with.

It so happened that the pastor himself was at home and met her at the door.

"I have been looking for you," he said, as he

held her hand. "Come up-stairs," he continued, "I want you to meet my sister in an informal fashion, as one of the old friends."

He led the way directly to the dear snuggerly. Ruth felt as if she could not bear the meeting with a stranger in this sacred place. She was left alone a few moments while Mr. Seymour went to call his sister, and for this she was thankful.

When she regained her composure sufficiently to look around, she saw that some personal belongings of Mrs. Seymour's had been taken away, and others with fewer associations had been put in their place. Her eyes were caught by a life-size portrait of the precious friend, smiling at her from over the mantel. This quite overcame her and the tears flowed fast and freely. What should she do? How could she meet either Mr. Seymour or his dreaded sister?

To her great relief, Mr. Seymour returned alone. He had an excuse on his lips for the delay, and a regret that he had just discovered that his sister had gone to ride. Ruth's tears told him the whole story. She vainly endeavored to check them and bring herself under control.

He wisely let her have her way for a few minutes, then taking her hand led her directly to

the picture. "Ruth," he said, "shall I tell you what that pictured face says to me? See, it is her own sweet smile, and it tells you and me to carry on the work she left behind. I seem to feel her ever beside me, and always with that same smile of love. I think that is just the expression her dear face will wear when she meets me on the farther shore."

His own look was radiant, as of a soul lifted above earthly sorrows. Ruth caught the inspiration, and gazed into the familiar features long and earnestly. The experience of that afternoon never lost its power. In the after anguish that came to her, the strengthening received before that picture in the room so haunted with sacred memories was more than a remembrance.

Through the months that came and went, numbering years in their flight, Pastor Seymour ministered to his flock in spiritual things. Never was a pastor more revered. He seemed like one set apart from mere earthly living, so that while he was in the world, fulfilling well his work, he was scarcely of it. His heart and hopes, as far as concerned himself, were all in the future, in a land where the inhabitant shall not say, "I am sick," and where there shall be no more sorrow, nor crying, for God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Swiftly as the time sped away, it seemed all too short to our young friends, who were eager to make the most of every moment in preparation for their life-work. Charlie Carey has quite recovered his health, and only a few scars remain to remind us of that never-to-be-forgotten time. He is taking a special course in college, preparatory to the study of medicine. His engagement to Katie Ingersoll is a well-known fact, and one which involves a long story; for he won his prize only after much opposition from her friends, to whom life in the distant Orient seemed like a burial.

Lucy has just graduated from the seminary, and after a year's medical study, expects to go abroad. This gives the missionary workers much thought and planning to do, for they have asked the privilege of preparing her outfit.

Ruth's heart and hands are busy with happy, pleasant work. School-days are over, to be sure, but there is more than enough to keep her occupied, both with church and home duties. Mrs. Ellis is not as strong as usual this fall, and leans more heavily on her dear, efficient oldest daughter.

Dr. Ellis is growing old. A score of years as a popular, busy physician, ministering to the

sick night and day, exposed to all sorts of weather, and never having time or inclination to spare himself, have begun to tell even upon his iron endurance. He too finds great comfort in having such a willing helper always at hand as Ruth has proved herself to be. She, dear girl, enjoys it all, and often says to herself that she has found her life-work. It contents her, too, and leaves her time and strength for entering in to the wider work of her friends.

The Christian Endeavor Society is such a joy in these later days. Indeed it has been nothing else since the memorable time when the girls found her, a weak, discouraged president, almost ready to give up and call her service a failure. Just then Katie came to the rescue with her blessed idea, which was certainly sent from the Lord; and how it revolutionized everything! Life from the dead was surely none too strong a way of expressing the change. It was the salvation of Fred, his sister remembers with a gush of grateful feeling. He has since told her how the temptations were thickening around him at the very time that the mission band interests occupied his energies in a better direction.

And Bertha? The old indolence and selfish

love of ease were gone in a great measure; for Bertha was now a Christian, with much to fight in her own nature and temperament, perhaps, but giving gratifying evidence that she was earnestly striving to overcome her faults. There was still apt to be friction between her and Ruth, owing largely to differences of temperament, but these times were becoming more and more rare.

Looking back upon this September in after years, Ruth felt that the peace and perfect content were too pleasant to last. Right into the midst of it, like an earthquake shock, came a blinding, crushing sorrow.

One lovely afternoon, when earth and sun and air combined to make a charming day, Ruth and her mother took a long ride into the country. Mrs. Ellis seemed better and stronger than she had for weeks; and her flow of happy spirits was so unusual that Ruth wondered and rejoiced greatly, feeling sure that health was coming back once more. But in the morning, when her mother did not appear at the call of the breakfast bell, Ruth hastened to her room. What a shock awaited her! Quiet and still the dear one lay, so that at first her daughter thought she was asleep. But it was the sleep that knows no earthly waking.

In a frenzy of fear Ruth summoned help. Dr. Ellis had gone away in the early morning to see a patient in the country. Another physician was soon procured, who said that life must have been extinct for at least an hour. Oh, the agony of that time! The stricken household felt as if the very foundations of life were shaken. A messenger had been despatched for Dr. Ellis. How Ruth dreaded, and yet longed for, his return! She, poor girl, could hardly think of her own grief, for the others clung to her in an utter abandonment of lamentation. Bertha, weak, undisciplined Bertha, was almost beside herself. God seemed to her like anything but a loving Father, when he could permit such a dreadful thing. Fred was a little more rational, and strove to control his own sorrow, to help Ruth calm and soothe Bertha.

They heard the doctor's horse coming up the avenue at a frantic rate of speed, and instinctively hushed their own weeping that it might not intrude upon the first shock of the desolation waiting to confront him. It was Ruth that met him in the hall as he staggered into the house, helped him remove his wrappings, and held him close as he leaned heavily upon her.

"Is it true, child? Is there no possible hope?" he whispered hoarsely.

She could only shake her head as he sank into a chair and covered his face, with such a groan that she felt that her loss was even less than his. "Let me see her," he said; and she led him to the room where the dear form, already composed and straightened for the grave by loving neighbors, lay in the peacefulness of death.

The strong man sank on his knees beside the body, took one of the cold hands in his, and poured into the unconscious ears such a torrent of broken words of passionate love and longing that Ruth could not bear it. It completely unnerved her, and she was about leaving the room, when her father called her back and asked for full particulars.

After she had told him all she knew, he exclaimed,

"I have feared this, child, for a long time: I knew there was some trouble with her heart, and have watched her, God knows how anxiously. Many times I have feared some terrible home-coming like this; but lately she has seemed so much better that I had relaxed my vigilance."

Again he groaned in agony, then went on brokenly:

"I never saw her sleeping more sweetly than

when I left her this morning. She must have slipped into heaven without any earthly waking."

He rose, and began pacing the room in such uncontrollable agitation that Ruth did not know what she could do. Presently there came a call for her at the door, and going out she found Mr. Seymour standing there, the tears of sorrow and sympathy streaming over his face. She could not speak, but she felt both her hands taken in a close warm pressure that brought with it comfort and calm. Then she remembered her father. "Go in to him," she sobbed, opening the door, "he needs you sorely."

He passed into the room of death, and she softly closed the door and left the two men together. "There could be no better earthly comforter," she thought, with a thrill of relief.

What passed between these two men, one with a heart buried in a far-away grave, and one with the crushing reality of a sudden bereavement, will never be known. Words are not always the truest comforters. For hours they remained together, until Ruth, realizing the necessity of arranging matters for the sad offices of burial, ventured to disturb them.

She found her father outwardly calm once more. As she entered he took her in his arms.

"It is well with her," he said in a trembling voice. "She cannot come back to us, but we shall go to her."

It was one of September's loveliest days when the last rites were performed and the mortal remains of Mrs. Ellis were laid away in the grave, to await the glad resurrection morning. The large house was filled to its utmost capacity with the friends who had known and loved her for so many years. Very fair and sweet she looked as she lay in her coffin, the white flowers that she always held so dear around her everywhere. The family took their last look in private, before the more public services.

Poor Bertha was so overcome that they feared she could not be present at the funeral. She shrieked and wept till utterly exhausted. But when Ruth proposed that she should go to her room, she begged so pitifully to stay, promising to try and be quiet, that they yielded.

It was a hard service for Mr. Seymour. Not only did it bring his own loss fresh before him, but it seemed as if his place must be among the mourners, rather than as the representative of divine comfort. But when the hour came he seemed lifted above himself, and spoke as one inspired from heaven. No wonder then that it was a rarely beautiful service. From begin-

ning to end it was suggestive of heaven and future blessedness and peace. For the time while the minister was speaking, present sorrow and loss and grief faded out of mind, and the soul was lifted to the New Jerusalem.

Woodland Cemetery was a beautiful place. It had been laid out in one of the loveliest spots imaginable, and tended with the greatest care. In one of its pleasantest nooks was situated the Ellis lot, which held, before this latest addition, two little graves. Years had passed since, with tears and pain, the childish forms had been laid there to rest. Now the newly dug grave, longer and larger, proclaimed that the mother had come to sleep beside her children.

"Ashes to ashes, dust to dust. If a man die, shall he live again? Though after my death worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. For this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality." While the sublime words of the burial service were still echoing they caught a glimpse of resurrection glory, and henceforth their thought of the beloved one would be above and not beneath the churchyard clay.

Ah, the taking up of life again after scenes like these! The going back to the desolate home, where the daily living must go on with-

out the loving presence! Is there anything harder? For there comes a time when the sympathizing friends and neighbors go their ways, the house takes on its old order, with, alas, its new emptiness, and the reaction after the terrible tension of the past days makes everything so much more difficult to endure.

Poor Ruth! Of course it was hard for all of them, but especially so for Dr. Ellis, and it was a blessing that the imperative demands of a number of very sick patients kept him from thinking of his own desolation. His brother physicians had attended to his work since the sudden blow had fallen, but now he must take up his duties once more. I think you will understand why I said "Poor Ruth," just now, when you reflect upon the responsibilities that rested upon her shoulders. She must be daughter and mother and older sister all in one. Bertha, as we have seen, was at times a difficult child to manage, and her mother had been the only one who had seemed to hold the key to her peculiar disposition. After the funeral she was really sick for some time, and nervous and fractious to the last degree. She seemed to see that she was making herself a great trial to her patient, tender sister, and would say, sometimes,

"Oh, Ruthie, I want to be good; but I can't

without mamma. The evil spirit couldn't stay where she was."

Fred was a real comfort. There was a perceptible increase of manliness and desire for noble things after his mother's death. But Ruth understood only too well the snares that lie in the path of all young men, and while she rejoiced with joy unspeakable that he had the safeguard of the Christian's faith, yet she knew that he needed watch-care and a wise influence. Her father was too engrossed with the calls of his profession to help her much in the direction of the children. He had so long given up the oversight of them to the home-keepers, that he could not take it up now without great effort. And then he depended on Ruth for a hundred different things. You can easily see that she had both heart and hands full.

"I have found my life-work in earnest," she said to Lucy one day. "You and Katie will go abroad and do wonderful things for the Master, I hope, while I shall stay here and take care of the children and father. They need me, and I am content, even if it is in a narrow path that my feet are set. It is a work that takes every bit of the grace and wisdom and strength that the Lord can give me. Never mind, Lucy dear; I love to think of the time when we four

friends can gather in a little corner of heaven, and compare notes regarding the way in which we have been led here below. I once thought I should like to be a foreign missionary; but it has been ordained otherwise. My duty lies before me, as plainly indicated as does yours. Only pray, dear, that the narrowness of the path may not cause me to have a narrow vision. I shall have to look through a telescope to see you and your work," she added, smiling, "and that will keep me from being only a microscopist."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE FIRST MESSENGER.

THE years of preparation were ended, and Lucy Gray was ready to enter upon her chosen work. At the suggestion of the Board she took an additional year of medical study, for it would be of great advantage to her to be able to minister to the bodies as well as the souls of the women in her field of labor. For it had been amply proved by experience that the medical missionary found the way into the confidence of the heathen by the help rendered in physical suffering much more quickly and easily than the mere teacher and preacher. When the greater efficiency of the white man's medical skill had once been tested, they were more ready to believe in his religion also.

It was a busy time in Woodland Park circles. Lucy's outfit had been undertaken by the ladies, and they were determined too make it complete in every particular. For was she not their first messenger to the heathen? I think I have forgotten to tell you that the Society of Christian

Endeavor had assumed her entire support. They had tendered this gift of an earnest, consecrated, well-equipped young missionary to the Board, and it had been thankfully and heartily accepted. She had been assigned to a newly opened station in the interior of Japan, where a very promising beginning had been made. The workers on the field had long been sending urgent appeals in behalf of this auspicious opening, which they felt could not be ignored without blood-guiltiness on the part of American churches. The year before, a young missionary and his wife had been assigned to this station, and were now on the field. The young man is an old acquaintance of ours, being no other than Henry Applegate. His wife was the daughter of parents who had given their lives to foreign mission work; therefore the love for heathen souls had come to her as a sort of inheritance. It was very pleasant to Lucy to feel that she was not to be associated with entire strangers. The station was far from the older stations, on what might be called the missionary frontier. The new laborers had to learn the language, and find their way into the hearts and confidence of the population as best they might.

The Mission Bands had found loving employ-

ment, in preparing picture-books, cards, basted patchwork, in fact, everything of the kind that could possibly aid in school work. Dr. Ellis's gift was a very complete case of medicine and instruments that would come within her range of use. Never did a young missionary go out with a fuller outfit of all things needful for personal comfort and the requirements of her future labor.

The days preceding her departure were very full of tender leave-takings. The Sunday afternoon prayer-meeting, before the final good-byes, was a melting season. Those who were to stay at home realized as never before that there was indeed a work beyond the sea. It appeared with new and wonderful vividness, now that one of their own was to be their representative. Following the previous preparation, this was the best telescope ever presented to their eyes. Such prayers for the work and the workers had not been heard in that room before. Especially was the dear sister remembered, who was to leave them so soon for this grandest of all departments of Christian labor.

What a strengthening and peace came into Lucy's soul by this assurance that she would go forth wrapped around by these guardian prayers! No need of fear when the shield and

buckler of the divine protection was thus implored in her behalf! Those present on the memorable occasion never forgot her words of joy and faith.

“I do not count it a great sacrifice to go,” she said. “No; rather is it a great privilege and pleasure. God’s earth is not wide, for his arms encircle his own in every part. You will be at work here, I there; and it will be all one work--the seeking for souls. Only remember to pray; pray earnestly; for I am very weak, and must have the anointing from on high before I can hope to do anything worthy of the great opportunity. God only knows whether I shall ever stand again in this blessed meeting and testify with you of the goodness of the Lord. But remember, dear ones, that if my body is laid to rest in Japan, far from all my kindred and heart friends, that I shall die content if only I can win for Christ some from among Buddha’s followers. My Scripture that I desire to leave as my message is this: ‘The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear! the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid!’”

Ruth Ellis was leading on this occasion. Her tears had been flowing freely, for in her loneliness the quartette had been tenderly near and

dear. Now she had a commission to fulfil. Rising, she spoke as follows, holding a broad-band gold ring in her hand:

“Dear Sister Lucy:

“The Christian Endeavor Society will hold you as still one of its own members wherever in the future the Lord may lead you. You are ours; for you go as our representative, and we feel that we could not offer the Master a more precious gift, for we have given him of our best and our dearest. In behalf of the society I give you this ring to serve as a reminder that you are our active member, a little way removed from us in another corner of the vineyard. See, it has ‘Mizpeh’ engraved within its circlet.”

Then as Lucy advanced to take the ring, Ruth placed it on her finger, and holding her hand in a tender clasp, said solemnly,

“‘The Lord watch between me and thee when we are absent one from the other.’”

From the rear of the room came dear Pastor Seymour, his face shining through a mist of tears. With lifted hands over Lucy’s bowed head, he pronounced the benediction:

“‘The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make his face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace.’”

The boys' Band were well-nigh inconsolable over the prospect of losing their leader. To be sure, the boys had nearly reached the stature of young men, but they had clung to their missionary organization. It seemed probable that they would soon be merged in the older society; but they felt a close attachment to their leaders of such long standing. It seemed a little strange that both the girls, Katie Ingersoll and Lucy Gray, that had taken upon themselves the far from easy task of interesting and training these boys in missionary directions, should be pledged to foreign mission work in person. Considering all these things, it would not be so very surprising if Woodland Park Church might not have other representatives abroad in after-years.

Lucy's time was fully taken up in these last days of preparation. Notwithstanding, the quartette planned for a final meeting of "we four, and no more," as they used to put it in the dear old girlish days. They were to meet at Katie's and take supper together.

By dint of close planning, Lucy contrived to have two or three hours for this sacred meeting. You must remember that it was no common tie that held these four hearts together. When you recall the opening chapter of this story, and

all that resulted from the happenings there related, you have the key to the heart-sympathy that existed between them.

It was a precious bit of communing that they enjoyed this afternoon. It was the first break in their number, and was soon to be followed by another. Lucy and Katie, on the other side of the world, had their work definitely marked out before them. Cecile had her hopes and dreams, thus far unspoken to the others. Ruth's work was as surely and clearly indicated as Katie's was, or as Lucy had ever seen her duty lying in far-off lands. Then there was another tie, reaching out beyond the quartette and yet involving them, for was not Charlie Cecile's brother, and dearest of all earthly friends to our little Katie?

They planned many things to keep up the old relationship. Regular correspondence first of all, and special letters from Lucy for the missionary gatherings.

"It will be just like looking through glass doors at you and your work, Lucy dear," said Ruth. "I shall put it that way, for I don't like our old favorite telescope idea when I think of you. I want you nearer than at such a desolate distance."

"I have been much interested in the thought

that is expressed in the proverb, 'Railroads make the world smaller,' " said Cecile. "Not only railroads, but steam in all its uses for the benefit of travel. Japan seems quite a near neighbor, since the steamboats bring it within a short voyage. Perhaps, Lucy, in the new inventions which are being every day brought forward, there will arise something which will enable us to come and spend a day with you occasionally."

"I was reading yesterday about flying-machines," said Katie, "and the possibility of air-navigation within a short time. Wouldn't it be delightful, if space could be so annihilated that foreign missions should not mean exile from home and loved friends?"

"It would indeed be almost too much like heaven for this imperfect old earth. It is hard to go away from you all, dear girls, and if you can ever find an air-ship coming my way, I sincerely hope you will take passage."

"I don't want you to think, you blessed trio," said Katie, "that I feel unwilling to make the sacrifice of going, even though it involves heart-breaks. But, Lucy, if we can exchange calls in the Orient, we won't be slow to embrace the opportunity."

"No, indeed; but I fear we shall have to wait

until that after-time when we have gone beyond the trammels of time and space. But we can take comfort in the thought of the swiftness of mail-communication in these later days. Just think of our first missionaries having to wait a year for an answer to their letters home! I tell you, that was exile with a vengeance."

We will not intrude on the sacred confidences of the last hour these four friends spent together. It included a prayer-meeting, for these girls, as we have seen, fully knew the power and comfort of laying all their concerns before the Lord.

The public farewell meeting was held on Wednesday evening. A representative from the Woman's Board was present, to give Lucy the official welcome to the work and her final charge. This woman was one of God's consecrated home-workers, and her words of hope and prophecies of cheer lifted up the hearts of Lucy's loving friends, and made them more glad than they had ever been that they had such a precious treasure to lay at the feet of the Master.

The choir was made up of Lucy's co-workers in the Endeavor Society. It was hard for them to control their voices sufficiently to sing. This parting-time brought all the tenderest feelings

into play, and the tears were not wholly those of sorrow. Pastor Seymour gave the charge in behalf of the church, and its loving farewell.

Lucy bore up bravely, and was more composed than many of her friends. She was enabled to forget herself in the glory of the work that lay before her. Yet the strain of these last days was a hard one, and it was with a certain sense of relief that the final words were at last spoken, even to father and mother, brothers and sisters. She went from Woodland alone, but at an early point in her journey was to meet a missionary family returning to Japan, with whom she was to make the voyage.

Across the continent to San Francisco, thence out through the Golden Gate upon the broad Pacific. A swift voyage of seventeen days, and they landed upon the shores of Japan, at Yokohama. A few days' rest here, and Lucy started upon her journey to the interior, accompanied by Mr. Applegate, who had come to Yokohama to meet her. A loving, cordial welcome awaited her from Mrs. Applegate, a charming little woman, who seemed at once like a dear sister.

And here we must leave our Lucy for the present, hard at work with that first obstacle, the Japanese language. At once her medical skill was called into requisition, and God gave

her such marked success in the family of a high Japanese official in Karatsu, that her reputation was made, and there was a prospect that her hands would be quite as full as she could manage in connection with her necessary study of this unknown tongue. Happy? Yes indeed; and more than contented in the certainty of present and the hope of future usefulness.

Eagerly were the letters looked for in Woodland which should announce her safe arrival and her introduction to her chosen work.

The first were of course to the home people; but so many and earnest were the inquiries, that her mother yielded them to be public property. This letter was read aloud in the Christian Endeavor meeting, and again in the church prayer-meeting. For, you see, Lucy was so thoroughly one of themselves, that it was like one home family waiting to hear tidings from an absent child. It was not long before full accounts came to the other friends, and it seemed as if the lines of communication between Woodland and the far distant station of Karatsu were in running order, conveying the heart-messages over the invisible wires.

But missionary interests were not the only ones finding lodgment in these circles with which we feel so pleasantly familiar. Gordon Stanley

has been back in Woodland for nearly two years, and is almost ready to begin the practice of law. But it is not the old Gordon that we used to know. His conversion, after that sickness so near unto death, has proved to be a very genuine thing. His whole life stands out in sharp contrast to his former weak, self-indulgent one. The friendship between him and Stephen Hollister is lasting and deep. Perhaps Gordon would not impress one with the sense of power and straightforward directness that Stephen does. But then the latter-named young man is one of a thousand, and is, moreover, largely the outgrowth of his peculiar circumstances. Gordon's antecedents were not calculated to develop the sturdy self-reliance that is characteristic of Stephen Hollister. But he is a very-much-in-earnest Christian, and a decidedly active member of the Endeavor Society.

It goes without saying that his views of foreign missions have greatly changed. Undoubtedly the bit of logic that Stephen riddled the night on which he was taken sick, the memory of which clung to him ever after, helped toward this result. But I would defy any real Christian, with a spark of desire for the establishment and prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom, to live during these times in the Woodland Park

church, and not become enthused with the prevailing inspiring spirit. Why, these enlightened workers would tell you, if you even hinted at a doubt as to the necessity and advisability of foreign missions, that they would not dare to utter the Lord's prayer, with its petition "Thy kingdom come," with a heart indifferent to the evangelization of the world.

Aunt Maria Brown, dear soul, went home only two months after Lucy Gray went to Japan. Those that knew her best marked how surely she was ripening for heaven months before the summons came. Poor Deacon Brown felt that his household was quite broken up when his Maria, as he fondly called her, entered the heavenly rest, leaving him, a feeble old man, to finish his journey alone. His children begged him to come and live with them, but he could not bring himself to leave the house where they had spent so many years of their pilgrimage together. So Aunt Patience Kelderby, who had grown too old for active service as a nurse, came and kept up the semblance of a home for him. He was happier so, and grew more and more rapt in the contemplation of things beyond the veil that hides the seen from the unseen. Aunt Patience understood him better than anybody else, and it was a great comfort to her to feel

that she was smoothing the pathway that leads to the river's brink for his way-worn feet. It was a good thing for her also; for she was one that could never have found contentment in an idle holding of hands that were no longer able to pursue their accustomed work. She said as much to Dorothy Dutton, when she ran in one morning to inquire after "Grandpapa."

"He's as well as common, child. I can see that he won't stay here long, though, for in my life I've grown to know the signs. He don't care for the news of the day, and lives all the time in that long ago when he and your grandmother were young folks together. He's thinking about heaven, when he comes back from the dead and gone days. He eats and sleeps well, but he's most done with earth, child; I tell you, I know the signs."

Aunt Patience was not mistaken. Before many months had rolled around, word passed from lip to lip, and from heart to heart as well, that Deacon Brown had been stricken with paralysis. Speech was gone, the power to move the good right arm was also gone; and Dr. Ellis tried in vain to relieve him. "He is surely dying," he said; "another stroke is probably inevitable, and that will end the earthly chapter." But though he could not speak, the dear old

man was conscious. His eyes were eloquent with welcome when those he loved came near him. Pastor Seymour was the one who seemed to understand best what he wanted to say. The words of prayer which he offered by his bedside were listened to with an expression of the deepest satisfaction.

But the aged pilgrim was longing for home. The Master was pitiful, and in the silence of the night-watches the finger of God touched him once more gently, and he "fell on sleep." Those who looked on the peaceful face as it lay in the coffin could not mourn that he was at last reunited to the wife of his youth, and had entered into the joys of eternal life. But Woodland Park Church felt indeed bereft, for the earth is always poorer when such a beautiful, godly character leaves it forever.

Thus one thing follows another in the kaleidoscope of our lives. We weep over the open grave, and turn away to smile at the bridal. As one grows older, he feels that life is one grand mosaic of joy and sorrow, laughter and tears, sunshine and shadow. God pity those who cannot see in all the varying changes a Father's hand!

CHAPTER XXII.

A GOAL ATTAINED.

THE long, weary years of preparation were at last over, and Stephen Hollister, having graduated with the highest honors from the law-school, had come back to Woodland to perfect arrangements with Judge Kennedy for the proposed law-firm of Kennedy and Hollister. This had been a favorite project with the judge for years—in fact, ever since the time when Stephen first began studying in his office, in the few hours of leisure that he could snatch from his duties in the bank. The old man was growing to feel the infirmities of age, and needed a young man to share the work and responsibility of his large practice. You can readily see that it was a rare opportunity for one just starting out in life and in a new profession. It meant an assured place and an assured income; and this was no small matter to a young man without a penny to invest in the world.

It meant much more than this to two people in the city of Woodland. To our friend Stephen

it made possible sooner than he had dared to hope, the home of his dreams. A year before this time Judge Kennedy had intimated his intentions, and with this definite future in view Stephen had asked for Cecile of her parents, and his request had been cordially received and granted. For Mr. Carey, although he had little sympathy with his prospective son-in-law's fanatical ideas, as he termed them, was fully alive to the almost certain success that awaited the young man in his chosen profession, with Judge Kennedy for a partner. Cecile's prospects for life gave him much greater satisfaction than did Charlie's, although his bitter feeling on the subject was kept, for the most part, locked in his own breast. Only his wife was made painfully aware of them, when occasional circumstances called them forth.

Mrs. Carey rejoiced over this engagement with great joy. Cecile would remain near home; for, as far as human vision could see, Stephen's business relations would locate him permanently in the city. Then how safe Cecile would be with such a strong, manly husband to cherish her with the tenderness of a nature that had all its life hungered for love. And he was a Christian in the truest, highest sense of the word. She had grown content and glad to give Charlie

to the foreign work, since the Master called him there, but she was none the less thankful to keep this dear only daughter close at hand.

And Cecile herself was quietly happy, feeling that her cup could hardly hold a greater fulness of joy. She was never impulsive or demonstrative in regard to anything, whether pleasure or sadness. As she looked back over her life, and her Father's leadings, she could only wonder over it all. And we, who first saw Stephen a green youth, doggedly determinate to win the highest place in his power, can wonder with Cecile over the development and growth of character that had made him the noble, self-assured, polished gentleman that he had become after all these years of discipline and culture. It was strange that he was not spoiled by so much success and the social attention that it brought to him. But he had within himself a safeguard against such dangers: he was too busy a servant of the Lord to think about his own progress and attainment. That was a marked characteristic of Stephen Hollister. It seemed as if he had grown unconsciously; that while improving every moment of his time, either in study and preparation for his profession, or in Christian work seeking for souls, no matter where he might be, his feet had been unwit-

tingly climbing upward. At all events, he had reached a height of which those who loved him the best were proud, and reverently thankful.

Perhaps, after all, there had been some heredity in the matter. His father, although poor, had been a sturdy, honorable, upright son of New England parentage. He had not possessed the advantages of education and culture, but he had transmitted to his boy the hunger for these desirable possessions, which, perhaps, stood him in better stead than money and lands would have done. His mother, too delicate to battle longer with a life of privation and care, had died when Stephen was only nine, leaving her son little more than a dim memory of her loving caresses and her prayers. Who knows what influence those prayers may have exerted upon the future life of the boy? For God does not forget; neither are the supplications and tears of his children unheeded.

It was autumn when Stephen came back to Woodland, ready to arrange for his place and work. The wedding day was set in the early spring, thus giving him time to make a nest for his bird. They were all glad that it could be before Charlie and Katie should leave them, which must be in a few months.

The winter sped very swiftly, for there was enough to do to keep all concerned exceedingly busy. Mr. Carey gave his wedding gift to Cecile a little in advance, so that it could be put in readiness for immediate occupancy as soon as the young people should return from their bridal tour. The gift was a cozy little cottage, only two blocks from the old home. Whenever the weather would admit, workmen were busy repairing, and freshening it with paper and paint. Before May came to bring the happy day it was in perfect order. The furnishing was the next consideration. Stephen stipulated for the privilege of supplying at least the heavier furniture, and the rest was to be given by her parents.

All weddings are alike, says some cynical reader. We do not think so. When our dear ones take upon them the solemn vows that mean so much, that brighten or blast the whole life, it is an occasion of momentous importance in our eyes. And we who have watched the progress of this acquaintance, feel as if Cecile and Stephen were somewhat akin to our own flesh and blood. We have sympathized so especially with Stephen in his hand-to-hand climbing from the bottom of the hill to the proud elevation he has attained, that we almost

feel as if we had something to do with his victory over obstacles.

Stephen had begged that May 23d, Cecile's birthday, might also be her wedding day.

It would have been indeed hard for any of these Woodland Park young people to have had any other clergyman than Mr. Seymour unite them in the sacred bonds of matrimony. For he had been with them in so many scenes of joy and sorrow, had rejoiced and wept as sun or shadow had been the portion of his flock. So it was his voice that pronounced the solemn words that were to unite these two hearts on this lovely May morning.

When we first made the acquaintance of Pastor Seymour his hair was black as the raven's wing, and he was comparatively a young man. But since the time when he was appointed henceforth to walk the earth alone he had grown old rapidly. His head had silvered and his form had bent, but not with the weight of years only. There are hearts in the world to whom the severance of the marriage tie by death means a loosening of the silver cord, and the increasing frailty of the golden bowl. Their hopes and longings being all across the river, they themselves hasten thither with quickening footsteps.

The quiet ceremony over, perhaps you will think that they made a peculiar choice in selecting their route for a wedding tour. They were not going on a long, expensive journey, wearying themselves and spending money all to no purpose. No, indeed! I flatter myself that you know these two young people too well for that in all these years of acquaintance. They were going to a Christian Endeavor Convention. It was one at which some well-known Christian workers were to be present, and give the results of their experience for the benefit of less renowned laborers in this same vineyard.

It was just such an opportunity as Stephen had long been desiring. His whole heart was wrapped up in the Christian Endeavor work. No wonder, for it had done more for him than any other human agency. His great ambition was to become an approved worker in this department, an ambition overtopping even that for success in his profession; and Cecile was most thoroughly in sympathy with him in this regard.

Night found them at the city of their destination. The convention had taken up its work that afternoon, and as soon as our travellers had taken supper at the hotel where they had engaged rooms, and removed the dust of travel,

they found their way to the church where the Lord's young soldiers were assembled. It was indeed an inspiring sight to see so many youthful, earnest faces in one congregation.

The address of the evening was like a clarion, calling for more aggressive, determined warfare against the enemy of souls. It was unlike anything either of our two friends had ever heard, and to Stephen it was a revelation. It marked an epoch in his life. Much of his future success in leadership in endeavor work, was traceable directly to this evening's experience. And all the way through it was an inspiration. Cecile had never been outside her own native city of Woodland for the purpose of seeing the wider circles of religious work. She was really enthusiastic, as Stephen had never seen her before in regard to anything. She was already eagerly planning how they could enlarge and widen the Christian Endeavor department of the church work at home; and began to be even impatient to return, so that they could put their new ideas into tangible form and practical operation.

Stephen, too, was not loth to return and begin the home life with his own darling wife. So it was not many days before they surprised their friends by returning and settling down in

their cozy little home, like old married folks, as Mrs. Carey said.

The Christian Endeavor Society soon felt the effect of the inspiration these two had received. Stephen was president; indeed, looking over the record of those days, it seems as if Stephen was always president. Perhaps that would not be a good example for other societies to follow, as rotation in office is in many cases to be recommended. But it must have been an illustration of the survival of the fittest. Election after election might change the other officers, but the head of it all remained its leader in name as well as in fact.

Judge Kennedy congratulated himself many times a day on the shrewdness that caused him to secure this young man for a partner before others had discovered his value. The only drawback to his perfect satisfaction was the fact that occasionally the conscience of the younger member of the firm stood in the way of a profitable client. No consideration would induce him to touch the unclean side of a case, and the old judge was too wise to ask it. But the strong, incorruptible honor and honesty of Stephen reacted on the older man, and unconsciously to himself his standard of morals was raised. In the course of time it came to pass

that when there was unrighteous influence to be purchased, or need to employ the chicanery of the law, those in pursuit of these ends passed by the firm of Kennedy and Hollister and sought less principled lawyers.

Such things always prove that honor pays best in the long run. Judge Kennedy's record for ability, and Stephen's rising fame, coupled with the fact of absolute cleanness and incorruptibility, brought so much business to the office that it became necessary to add to its working force. At Stephen's recommendation, Gordon Stanley was admitted into the partnership, and the firm name stood henceforth as Kennedy, Hollister, and Stanley. Gordon having been in former days a student of Judge Kennedy's, the old man knew something of his ability and character.

One evening Gordon was sitting on the pleasant piazza at the Hollisters', and talking over past times. A letter had just been received from Lucy Gray, giving vivid pictures of her life and work in far-off Japan. This had brought up reference to the topic of foreign missions, and they were indulging in something of a retrospect.

"I have reason to love foreign missions," said Gordon Stanley. "Under God, and through

Stephen here as his agent, I feel that to them I owe my conversion. But how I did hate the very name at first!"

"I shall never forget that night when I went to your room to cheer you up," said Stephen, laughing, "and you threw that bit of logic at my head. But I can assure you I was frightened when you went off into that chill, because I was afraid I had been the death of you."

"It was the death-blow to my self-conceit," answered Gordon. "I believe it clung to me all through those days when I knew nothing rationally. At all events it stood ready to down me when I came to myself."

"Dear Katie was the beginner of it all," said Cecile. "Do you know, when I think it over, and all that has come of that afternoon's planning when she burst in upon us with the words, 'Girls, I've got an idea!' little realizing where that idea was to lead us, I fairly tremble. Who knows what train of circumstances, either good or evil, may follow our simplest words?"

"I have a great deal to thank foreign missions for," said Stephen gravely. "It was the first real inspiration of my life. All that went before was just a dull, dogged grinding. Katie's idea led to our trip to Burmah, you remember, and that, as I believe, was the first step toward

the winning of my wife here. And then, the whole matter was such a revelation to me of the narrow, selfish way in which I had been living. It brought me out of my shell into a broader, better life. Yes, all things considered, I think I owe a little more to the blessed telescopes of foreign missions than any one else."

CHAPTER XXIII.

A SECOND OFFERING.

How long the years of preparation seemed to Charlie Carey! There were months of enforced quiet after his severe injury, in which it was hard for him not to fret and chafe under the hindrance. How he longed for some of the wasted years lying behind him! But lost time can never be recalled, and the discipline involved in the waiting was probably just what he needed to fit him the better for his life-work; for our Father does not afflict needlessly, and it is a blessed thing when we can come to the point of realization of this fact. This experience, however, materially modified Charlie's plans, leading him to take a shorter course previous to the medical preparation, which was to be as thorough as possible. All through, Dr. Ellis had been his trusted adviser. His own father not being in sympathy with him in regard to his chosen field of labor, it was a good thing that he had such a friend.

I believe you have never had a glimpse of

Katie Ingersoll's home and surroundings. As she is one of the important two that appear in this chapter, perhaps you will the better appreciate the situation if you are introduced to her family and near friends.

Mr. Ingersoll was a merchant. Business absorbed him, heart and soul. He reminded one of the father in the little boy's song, who had not time to go to heaven because "he couldn't leave the store." He had prospered in a worldly point of view, and his name was on the church roll, but the love of money had taken such complete possession of him that there was very little room for Christ.

There were three children in the Ingersoll home. Our friend Katie was the oldest. Edie came next, and there was also a little brother, who at this period of our story had attained the dignity of five summers. Robbie was Katie's especial pet and pride, and he returned her affection with all the strength of his boyish heart. Mrs. Ingersoll was also a nominal Christian, a member of a different church from her husband and Katie. She was quite an active worker in the temperance cause, and not being in the habit of looking much farther than Woodland and its saloons, had come to have rather a microscopic vision. Not that there is any need

of narrow vision in temperance work. One would think that it would have a reverse effect. But it depends largely on the workers themselves. Mrs. Ingersoll had deliberately chosen to confine her views within the small range of her home city, and the inevitable result of short-sightedness followed.

It may seem strange that Katie should be such an earnest Christian, with broad, warm sympathies, when the example of both parents was of the opposite character. For it is the usual order of things, that the children absorb the home atmosphere. There are exceptions, but they only prove the rule true.

In explanation, let me introduce to you Aunt Martha Ingersoll, Mr. Ingersoll's sister, who had made her home in her brother's family for many years. Mrs. Ingersoll was so absorbed in her temperance work, that it was a blessed thing for the children that they had such loving watch-care during her frequent absences. Aunt Martha was an active Christian, very much alive to the needs of the Master's work. Her field, she saw, was clearly marked out for her in the training of these little ones; and so it came about that they received real Christian nurture at her hands. Without her, this would have been sadly lacking. Katie could scarcely re-

member the time when she had not talked with Aunt Martha about heavenly things. It was no wonder, therefore, that early in her young life she learned to love this Saviour with whom she had been made so constantly familiar.

Mrs. Ingersoll was glad, of course, to see the child converted, but congratulated herself that her children had a natural leaning toward that which was good. She was quite satisfied with her own spiritual attainments, and fed all possible soul-hunger with the husks of outward activity in a worthy cause.

Dear Aunt Martha! I wish you could see her as she is photographed on Katie's memory. A very plain woman, whom at first sight you would call decidedly homely, but beautiful in the eyes of her loyal, admiring foster-children. To be sure, her grammar was not always faultless, and her dress was altogether too plain to suit her sister-in-law. But she was the home-keeper, and the home-angel as well; seldom going out, except to church on Sunday, when she occupied the Ingersoll pew with the children, and in her quiet corner prayed for the minister that he might be assisted in proclaiming the truth.

It was to Aunt Martha rather than to her mother that Katie went with her spiritual ex-

periences. Mrs. Ingersoll really did not dream what a stranger she was to her daughter's soul-life. She looked out for her proper adorning, that she was well supplied with dress according to her father's financial ability, felt proud of her pretty, airy graces and sprightliness of thought and speech, gave especial heed to her physical well-being and purity of associations, as became an ardent temperance woman with all that the name implies; but gave little thought to the graver matter of her faithfulness to her Christian vows. She had a vague idea that this important part of the girl's welfare would come right of itself, and certainly she could see nothing in her daughter's daily life and conversation to arouse any fears in this regard. But it was the faithfulness of Aunt Martha, not her own, that would at last merit the plaudit, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

The new missionary departure found an interested listener in Aunt Martha. She gave eager attention to all Katie could tell her, as it progressed and developed. She made one of the audience at the time of the memorable trip to Burmah, and her vision was in the truest sense telescopic. Such longings and yearnings as sometimes came up in her soul—a feeling almost

of regret that she could not have known all this in her own young days, and given her life to work for the perishing heathen. But, believing as earnestly as she did that it is God that orders all our ways, she stifled these sighs for a wider career, and took up her burden of daily duty with her usual quiet cheerfulness.

When, in the later days, Charlie asked for Katie, to share with him a life devoted to foreign mission work, the request convulsed the Ingersoll family like the shock of an earthquake. The father loved his children, was devoted to their interests in his own fashion, and his daily toiling and slaving was for their future good. At least that was what he told himself when his self-appointed constant exile became burdensome. In fact he had set for himself the figure at which he would stop and begin to take time to enjoy the society of his loved ones.

There was no objection to Charlie himself. His father was wealthy also, and if he would be sensible and stay among civilized people and practise his profession, they would be only too proud to see her his wife. Both Mr. and Mrs. Ingersoll were agreed for once, and Katie was made to feel the weight of their objections.

Aunt Martha was the only one in sympathy

with the poor child, and her loving counsel helped the girl more than words can express.

These two hearts did much praying during these trying days. Edie was more reasonable than her father and mother, thanks to her mission band training, but she felt that it would be much easier to see some one else's sister go to the far-off lands, than to give up her only one. Robbie was loud in his disapproval.

"My Katie shan't go," he would say, vehemently. "Robbie wants Katie."

And they all wanted Katie. It was no wonder; for this dainty, bright little maiden filled a large place in the heart of the family. The outlook was dark; but Aunt Martha's faith never faltered.

"If the Lord really wants you there, Katie dear," she would say, "he will open the door. Think how much Charlie had to pass through before he could see the way clear before him!"

This made Katie shudder. Was she willing to go through such a blackness of darkness as he had been called to traverse before he could find the open door? Aunt Martha saw that her illustration had been an unfortunate one, and hastened to modify it.

"The Lord has more than one way out, darling, and it isn't at all likely that he will call you

to pass through the experience that Charlie did. He is all-powerful, and he can make your father and mother feel very differently, and he is going to do it, too, in his own good time."

To Katie's longing heart, the time so confidently prophesied by Aunt Martha seemed very long in coming. She tried to feel trustful, but it was hard work sometimes, and often, these nights, her pillow was wet with tears. She began to grow pale and thin, and ate so little that Mrs. Ingersoll's motherly fears were roused. Her father also grew solicitous, as his daughter lost her gay spirits, and went about the house with a listless, quiet step, so different from her usual self. They talked in family counsel about sending her away for change of scene. Aunt Martha felt that the time had come for her to speak.

"All the change in the world isn't going to do Katie any good," she said, "as long as you are crushing the very life out of her heart. She loves Charlie Carey, and he is as good a young man as can be found anywhere; even you confess that he is. And that is only half the story. The Lord is calling this child to special work for him, and she has promised to obey his leadings. Can you hope to withstand this double call, and not be the murderers of your child?"

They looked at her in astonishment. Never in all the years of her life had Aunt Martha been heard to talk in so plain a fashion. But she had prayed over the matter, and it had been made clear to her that it was her duty to break down the thorn-hedges in Katie's path if possible. As she talked, it seemed to her that it was not her own words that she was speaking; that they were put into her mouth by a power beyond herself. And the arrow, sped by the Spirit of God, and not at random, found lodgment in the father's heart.

He sat for a full minute, looking in amazement at his usually quiet, meek sister. Then he arose and began to pace the floor. Conscience, which had been sleeping for years, stirred uneasily. What if it were all true?

Mrs. Ingersoll could not give up her own ideas without a struggle. She tried to argue the case with Aunt Martha, but that individual had spoken the message delivered unto her, and would neither add to nor retract aught from it. Her husband, restlessly walking back and forth, said not a word to help her cause. Suddenly she rose and left the room. Her conscience was not a comfortable companion at this time. Yet she was not willing to heed the emphatic endorsement it sought to give to Aunt Martha's

words. What did ail the woman? she thought. Surely she was not going daft after all these years? The idea that she should try to teach them their duty in reference to one of their own children! It was of no use to try and frighten her into any course she did not choose to take. And yet, if——

She could not put the terrible thought into tangible form. Katie had never been a self-willed child, and now her attitude was not that of rebellion. Could it be that her heart was so deeply involved in this matter that to give it up would cost life itself?

That evening the husband and wife had such a talk together as they had not had for years. God himself had stirred the depths of their souls, and they stood revealed to themselves and to each other. There was something to work on in their cases, as there would not have been in a wholly unregenerate heart. It is a sign of returning spiritual health when individuals are ready to confess their shortcomings one to the other. In view of all this, it is not strange that these two slumbering Christians became wide-awake. A heart-broken cry for mercy always finds the Master more than half-way to meet the penitent soul.

So the thorn-hedges which had so pierced her

tender feet were cleared from Katie's pathway. For these parents, sharing in the experience which had come to Charlie Carey's mother a little in advance, grew glad and thankful that they had such a precious treasure to lay at the feet of Christ.

Dr. Carey, as we may now call him, had passed his examination before the Board, and had been appointed to Upper Burmah. The time of sailing had been fixed for October, and so the wedding was to take place in September, to allow ample time for all necessary arrangements. Mr. Ingersoll was a man that did nothing by halves, and so it came about that he quietly informed the Board of Missions, under whose auspices the two were to go out, that he proposed to support his daughter himself, and make this his annual offering to the cause which had grown so dear. And Mr. Carey, hearing of the action of Katie's father, immediately announced that his son should receive a like amount yearly from him. His motive was not the prosperity of the missionary work to be under Charlie's direction, but the feeling that his boy should not receive support from any private source other than himself. But, whatever the motive, one fact was assured, that this particular station would not be so hampered by the lack of funds

as were many others. Thus does God cause even the unworthy motives of individuals to praise him.

Katie's full outfit also came from home. The privilege of fitting her out with every possible need and comfort was too great to be delegated to others; and Mr. Ingersoll gave his wife full power to draw upon his bank account to any needed extent. She had grown so in sympathy with Katie's hopes and prospects, that, while temperance work was by no means forgotten, it no longer held the first place, to the exclusion of everything else.

You may imagine these were busy days and weeks. All through the summer, knots of the Christian Endeavor girls would gather in Mrs. Ingersoll's sewing-room, for she did not refuse the help of their deft fingers, and she knew what a labor of love it was to them. It was a hard time for Ruth Ellis, as she saw before her the parting with another one of the loved girls who had formed their quartette. Lucy Gray was already busy and happy in Japan, Cecile was married, and although near at hand in bodily presence, was absorbed in her home and her husband. Now Katie, the last one, was about to go, and she must stay at home, in the narrow path in which her feet had been set.

Narrow, indeed, it looked to her, when she contrasted it with the ways stretching out before Lucy and little Katie. But I am doing Ruth injustice if I give you the idea that she was unhappy and discontented with her lot. No, indeed! Believing it had been appointed by the Master, she would not have exchanged it if she could. Only, sometimes the loneliness of it came over her like a flood.

The Mission Bands, as they called themselves still, although merged in the Junior Society of Christian Endeavor, were preparing numerous gifts for the departing ones. Katie's boys, though boys no longer, but rather tall young men, looking down on their small friend and teacher, hovered around her like protecting spirits. So many were the friends who proved themselves helpful and loving, that it was decided that the wedding must be in the church, since Mr. Ingersoll's house would not hold the people who desired to be present.

This plan was exceedingly distasteful to Mr. Carey, who would have preferred a wedding in his own house. He told his wife that the whole matter of Charlie's future had been taken from out of his control in the strangest manner. From beginning to end it had shaped itself in every particular in spite of him. And yet he

could not find any tangible point of which he could take hold in opposition.

Mrs. Carey looked up quietly and said,

“Henry, perhaps the Lord sometimes rules things on this world of his without the intervention of his creatures.”

It was not a consoling or comfortable thought. He tried to put it away, but, like Banquo's ghost, it would not down. What if it were true, and the Lord had been managing this thing all the time? He believed there was a God, and the mysterious way in which all direction of Charlie's affairs had been taken out of his hands, without even a chance for remonstrance or objection, certainly looked as if a power higher than his own was at the helm. If he was convinced, he made no sign to others, only that henceforth his lips were sealed, even to his wife, as far as regarded this subject.

We must not linger over the busy scenes of this closing week—the marriage ceremony, the kindly gifts of friends, the round of parting visits. Through it all there was something about his father that Charlie could not understand: there was an atmosphere about him as of fierce inward battle. He spoke to Katie, and she had noticed it also. Yet there was an air that forbade any approach to personal subjects.

They could only pray. Indeed, ever since Charlie's return from the gates of death he had been making his father a subject of special and importunate prayer. He felt sure that these petitions would be answered in God's own good time. If only he might be privileged to see it before speaking the last farewell!

But this was not to be. Mr. Carey went through the parting scene with the same unnatural composure that had characterized him of late. He saw his only son go from his sight, while others were weeping around, without a tear. The farewells, public and private, had been spoken; the last words of his boy, as he wrung his father's hand, had been whispered in his ear:

"Oh father, precious father, if I never see you again on earth, let me meet you in heaven!"

The conductor's "All aboard!" sounded, and they were gone. Mr. Carey felt as if a death-like grip was fastened on his throat. He mechanically turned away and went to his office. He must fight this thing out, or die.

As once before in his life, he locked the door and looked a vital issue in the face. He walked the floor; then, prone on his face, wrestled in mortal agony. He never knew how the long day passed. Knocks on his door were unheeded,

dinner-time came and went unknown to him. Ah, the strength of a will that has never learned obedience, either to earthly or to heavenly authority! It must have been that the prayers that were even then ascending from loving hearts in his behalf turned the tide of battle, for in the shades of the coming night Henry Carey yielded to his God.

He rose from his knees feeling a new, strange quietness and peace. There was no exultant joy, only a calm, like nothing save the depths of the sea or the heights of heaven. As he tried to walk, he staggered with weakness. The terrible struggle and long fasting had made him as weak physically as a child.

Some one tried the outer door. He opened it, and there stood his wife, uneasy at his long absence. He admitted her, and one look into his face told her the story. Can you imagine her joy? Oh, if there is rejoicing in the presence of God among the angels over one sinner that repenteth, what must it be to the loving heart of the Crucified!

There was just time for the glad tidings to reach Charlie and Katie before they set sail for the Orient, the second offering of Woodland Park Church to the cause of missions.

It seemed to Charlie and Katie that they were

traversing a strangely familiar route. Often one would say to the other, "Don't you remember we saw this on our first trip to Burmah?" England was reached, and passed through as in a half-recalled dream; the Channel tossed them about in as uncompromising a manner as on the former occasion. France was another stage of the journey, and as they embarked on the blue waters of the Mediterranean, the waves seemed to sing them a familiar lullaby as they sank to sleep.

One thing was changed: they took the shortest route, and sailed through the Suez Canal instead of the longer way in their imaginary journey. Out on the Indian Ocean they again struck the former route, and sailed across the Bay of Bengal and up Burmah's great river to Rangoon. Thence, by boat and by rail they penetrated into the interior, to the station near the Ka-Chin hills to which they had been assigned. Here we must leave them for the present, in the care of the same loving Providence which had brought them through so many experiences to this field of labor for Him.

The pebble cast into the waters of spiritual life in Woodland Park Church by the missionary departure years ago has reached in its

widening wavelets this distant shore. Who can estimate its results by the time that earth shall be no more, and eternity sums up the records ?

CHAPTER XXIV.

VARIOUS HAPPENINGS.

IT has been a long time since our friend Paul Fletcher has appeared in our story. He and his mother have been absent from Woodland for nearly two years, spending the interval with a brother of Mrs. Fletcher's, living in a distant city. The journey was undertaken with the hope that medical aid might be found for Paul, that could at least prevent the paralysis from creeping farther. In a measure the effort had been successful. Paul's general health was much improved, and he had a better use of his right arm.

“Man may come and man may go,
But I go on forever,”

sings not only Tennyson's brook, but Father Time as well. Passing on, we find it just ten years since the afternoon when Katie burst in upon her friends, Cecile and Lucy, with her “new idea;” and feeling it to be a sort of anniversary occasion, Ruth Ellis, the fourth one in

the quartette at that memorable time, is spending the day with Cecile Hollister.

The days have grown chill, for this is November once more. Cecile and Ruth have been indulging in reminiscences, such as would be called out by the associations connected with the date. They almost forget, as they talk, the flight of time and imagine themselves girls again, with the old-time interests and pleasures.

"Dear little Katie!" said Cecile. "I can see her now, with her floating ribbons and her flying curls, coming in upon us like a small whirlwind, carried quite beyond herself with the force of her idea. How little we realized what it would lead to in after days!"

"It was the starting-point of a good many things," answered Ruth. "Do you suppose we can ever get through the tracing out of results, even in eternity? There would of course have been many changes in our circle of young people in ten years, if Katie had never given her idea expression; but such a scattering in one direction, and gathering up in another, surely would not have been."

"No," said Cecile reflectively. "I suppose Charlie would have been practising medicine in some American city instead of far-away Burmah."

"Are you sure of that?" asked Ruth, rather startlingly. "Has he not said, again and again, that it was his first glimpse through the foreign mission telescope that set him to thinking, and showed him what an aimless life he was living?"

"You are right, Ruth. It has been so long since the time when Charlie was not the earnest, active Christian he has been in later years that I am apt to forget the former days of folly."

"Forgive me for recalling it, then, dear. But you surely remember how many of our best workers dated their first impressions from that time. Gordon Stanley, for instance!"

"Yes, and many others. By the way, do you know what has become of Henry Peterson? Stephen was wondering yesterday."

"Mrs. Carpenter told me recently that John has always kept up a correspondence with him. They were associated in the same office, you know. He has entered the ministry, and is preaching on the home mission frontier."

"Another missionary! Well, it is all the same work, whether here or abroad."

"There was another interesting thing in regard to the matter that she told me. It seems that Henry had an invalid mother, who was a very devoted Christian. He believes it was her prayers that led to his conversion in the first

place, although John Carpenter was the immediate instrument. After he became a minister, she told him that she had always asked God for this, even from his babyhood. Soon after his ordination she died, happy in having her heart's desire fulfilled."

"And yet Henry was such a fop when we first knew him! I never had harder work not to positively dislike him in those early days." So spoke Cecile.

A summons to the kitchen called her away; and while she is gone, let us study our old friend Ruth's face, and see what record the years have left behind them. There are a few wrinkles, certainly, for cares have rested heavily since her mother's death. Dr. Ellis is growing too infirm for the more active duties of his profession, and devotes himself mostly to his large office practice. He depends far more than he is aware upon his dear, thoughtful, oldest daughter.

Fred is such a comfort! A boy no longer, but a man, both in stature and in soul. He graduated from college two years ago, and is nearly through with his medical course, for he is to become his father's partner. An outspoken, active Christian, Ruth rejoices over him with all her heart. She is glad, too, that

there is to be another Dr. Ellis, and fondly believes that he is to be a second edition of his noble, successful father.

And what about Bertha, the child of so many anxieties, prayers, and tears? Her mother-sister has had many a day of painful experience and bitter perplexity over her waywardness, but now all that lies in the past; and patient, loving tenderness is bearing precious fruit. Bertha has just graduated from the seminary, and is already sharing her older sister's burdens.

So now Ruth is beginning to find time to reach out a little from the home paths and look about over wider fields. Her long-neglected music is being revived, and Dr. Ellis listens with an air of wonderful content when her fingers touch the old, familiar keys. She is satisfied with what life has brought her, and a sweet, tranquil peace is written on her face.

Stephen Hollister comes home to dinner, and the conversation is diverted to the work and enterprises of the present. For many years Stephen was "chronic president" of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, as his wife termed it. But he decided that it was not for the best interests of the society to allow it to lean on him so entirely. So the chief office ro-

tates as well as the rest in these later days. Just now John Carpenter is its wide-awake, earnest president. The fields occupied by this strong band of endeavorers are widely extended. Home work has broadened, and rooms have been opened for a variety of purposes. There are reading-rooms for the young men who have no attractive place in which to spend their evenings, but are left to the saloons or the streets. There are committee rooms for the convenient transaction of necessary business. Then there is a large and pleasant room for prayer-meetings, missionary meetings, or occasional lectures and concerts. They have not secularized their work to make it attractive to the masses, but have rather rendered inviting the spiritual efforts to which they are pledged. The aim of the Woodland Park Christian Endeavor Society is the saving of souls. Nothing less than this can satisfy its high ideal. The central influence of it all is Stephen Hollister. But he does not forget that they must plan for the future as well as the present. So he is training the younger members to bear responsibility, that they may be able to carry on the grand enterprises when the power to do is taken from these older burden-bearers.

The Society still supports Lucy and her school

in Japan. Frequent letters keep the events and scenes in that far-distant land vividly before their minds.

As Stephen sits at his dinner-table to-day, we see that he has developed into just the noble manhood that his earlier years gave us reason to expect, for he is of a type that does not reach its full maturity early in life. Added days bring slow and rich ripening. He has won an honored name in his profession, a name that stands for all that is high-minded in business. The firm now stands as Hollister and Stanley, for Judge Kennedy passed from the stage of earth some years ago. It is a prosperous partnership, and has won an enviable reputation throughout the country.

The old Mission Bands are known by that name no more. The members clung to the organization, long after it was merged into the Junior Society of Christian Endeavor. The Bands did their work, and their memory is blessed. The former boys and girls are grown, and out in various parts of God's world at work. The present boys and girls are being trained in this well-organized junior society along all the lines of Christ's service, both at home and abroad.

Do you remember Violet Brown, the girl whose story came up in the "Saving A Penny"

time? If so, you will recall that she was left almost alone in the world, without parents, brothers and sisters. Under the influence of the strong foreign missionary spirit among Woodland Park young people, she gave herself to the work across the sea, going out as an independent missionary, supported from her own resources. She asked an appointment from the Woman's Board, that she might labor under their auspices, where she was most needed. They sent her to China, and our friends in Woodland felt that she was another messenger from their number, on the Foreign field.

About a month after the anniversary day, kept by Ruth and Cecile, a letter was received from Lucy Gray, in which she writes as follows:

“DEAR ONES AT HOME:

“You will doubtless be surprised at the news I have to tell, but the fact is, I am coming home. I have known of the probability for some time, but not until it was a certainty did I wish to tell you anything about it. Last year, I had a severe fall, injuring my right limb, which laid me up completely for a time; but I had no thought of it as being more than a temporary injury, until I attempted to take up my usual work again. The doctor has ordered me home

to get strong and well, giving me full encouragement that after a good rest in a more bracing air, and under the care of dear Dr. Ellis, I can return as good for work as ever. I think it would break my heart to think of leaving my charge here forever, for it is as precious to me as life itself. If I thought I never should be able to come back, I believe I should decide to stay and do half-duty as long as the Lord should give me strength for that. My grave would give the heathen and the native Christians an idea of what love unto death really means. But I have no desire to die just yet. Life is too sweet, for what one may accomplish; and if by coming home and recruiting I can lengthen the term of my service in Japan, it is my desire to do it.

“Can you imagine, dear friends, how my heart bounds at the thought of seeing you all? It seems a long time since I said farewell and turned my face toward this distant land. The years have been full of happy work, and the Applegates are like one’s own flesh and blood. How I wish I could show you my school of Japanese girls! I assure you, every one of them is beautiful in my eyes; and even your critical American taste would pronounce some of them attractive. Your organ does grand service for

the Master's cause, not only on Sundays, but on week days as well. These people have sweet voices and love to sing, and Mrs. Applegate, who is the musician of our missionary family, has been remarkably successful in teaching our girls music. Their singing attracts the heathen, and gives us an opportunity to tell them the old, old story.

"I hope the Junior Society will have some cards ready for the school before long. We have found them of the greatest help as rewards for punctual attendance. I shall probably be on my way home before this reaches you, but please send them on to aid Mrs. Applegate in the double burdens she must bear in my absence.

"Hoping to see you ere long face to face, although it seems, as I write the words, that I must be dreaming, I am, with the old love,

"Your friend and fellow-worker,

"LUCY GRAY."

What a welcome awaited the weary exile as she came back to the dear familiar scenes to rest and recruit her failing strength! Death had not entered her beloved home circle, as it had so many others, but the precious father and mother and sisters were spared to clasp her

once more in their arms. The years had left their traces on all, but the fond hearts beat as true and strong as ever.

How they clustered about her, this first missionary entirely their own! How proud the Society was of her record, and when she was somewhat rested from her long journey, how they loved to hear of the work that had grown to be part of her very being! Dr. Ellis, feeble as he was, showed his old energy in caring for the troublesome limb. Her presence was the first tangible proof of the work they had helped carry on beyond the sea.

As letters seem to be the order of the day, we will ask Mr. and Mrs. Carey's permission to make a few extracts from Dr. Charles Carey's last message home.

"Your late good letter found us on the move. The weather was dreadfully hot here in the plains, so we went up on the hills, to a point where the temperature and climate reminded us strongly of dear America. Katie and the children improved visibly before we had been there three days.

"How I wish we could walk into the old home, Katie and I with the children! Henry, your name-child, father, has always been very delicate. The hot weather wilted him like a

tender flower. As he is only two and a half, he is almost a baby still; and so while Katie cares for the real baby, Cecile, of whose advent we wrote you a month ago, I keep a watchful eye on our boy. Of course, when I am engaged in active missionary work I cannot help her in this direction; but up here I am taking a sort of half vacation, trying to store up some strength for my duties below when we return.

“The people speak a different dialect from those in our station, Thyatmyo. We have a native boy with us, who was raised here and can understand and use both languages. The heathen have found out that I am a doctor, and come sometimes in crowds for medicine, but never seem to care to hear about the Great Physician. God only knows how hard it is to break the power of idolatry over the hearts of the people. Sometimes I feel that we are accomplishing nothing; then, when I look back over the time we have been here, I can see advance. You do not know what a precious thought it is to me, that my father can pray, and does pray for his absent children. The knowledge of this blessing brightened all the voyage hither, and never ceases to be a sweet comfort.

“My work is largely that of a healer of bodies,

yet this gives me many opportunities to reach the souls too. Katie teaches when she is able; and she is a lovely little object lesson to these heathen, who know absolutely nothing of the true charm of the word home. The women see her with her babies, in her sweet motherhood, and see her, too, the queen of our little bungalow, and it never ceases to be a perpetual wonder and query.

* * * * *

"This will reach you in the early winter. It would indeed be refreshing to see the snow. The continual heat is very prostrating; yet we have occasion to thank God for reasonable health and for great joy in our work. Life seems so rich and full with all these opportunities to rescue the perishing for whom Christ died."

This letter found Mrs. Carey quite feeble. It was lonely in the great house, with the children no longer there. For a mother never ceases to miss her loved ones, no matter how long they may have been away.

Pastor Seymour went home a year ago. To the last he was the tender shepherd of a loving flock. He was spared a lingering sickness, for an acute pneumonia, the result of a sudden cold

contracted in attending a funeral, brought the end quickly. How glad he seemed to go! Do you think it strange? Remember how utterly alone he was, as regarded earthly loves. Nearly all those that were his kindred according to the flesh were on the other side awaiting his coming.

The church was inconsolable over its loss. It seemed as if they could never make up their minds to call any one else by the sacred name of pastor. But a younger brother of Mr. Seymour's, also in the ministry, was at the funeral. He resembled his brother Henry in many respects, and the result was, that after a time he was called to the vacant pastorate.

But what a glorious testimony to the power of the Christian faith was that home-going! Those present when Pastor Seymour bade good-bye to earth never could forget the scene. It was like the joy of a prisoner, long an exile from friends and native land, who feels his fetters breaking and the day of glad reunion at hand. His sister was weeping at his bedside. Others, too, were dropping silent tears in this chamber of death, for all claimed him as their own. He looked at his sister pityingly. "Dear," he whispered, "it is better so. I have been homesick, oh, so long."

A favorite poem came to her mind, especially the last words of it, altered a little to suit the circumstances.

“Nay, but the land where my darling went,
And the home where my nestlings be,
There is the home where my thoughts are sent,
The only home for me.”

And so, even while they were watching him, he softly breathed out his life and passed over to the other side.

My story is told. In its pages you see unfolded, day by day and year after year, the results from a small beginning. Small indeed, as you have seen; but to what blessed endings have we come. Endings, did I say? Nay, rather, only beginnings still, for we must wait until the revelations of eternity to measure the whole.

“Let us be strong in the doing, for that is ours alone ;
The meaning and end are his, and he will care for his
own.”

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